CHAPTER 6
URBAN OPERATIONS

Urban operations are not new to the US Army. Throughout its history the Army has fought enemies on urban terrain. What ***is*** *new is that urban areas and urban populations have grown significantly during the late twentieth century and have begun to exert a much greater influence on military operations. The worldwide shift from a rural to an urban society and the requirement to transition from combat to stability and support operations have affected the way US forces conduct combat operations. Companies, platoons, and squads will seldom conduct UO independently but will most probably conduct assigned missions as part of a battalion urban combat operation. This chapter provides the necessary background information to facilitate an understanding of how commanders plan and conduct UO.*

Section I. INTRODUCTION

Urban operations (UO) are defined as military actions that are planned and conducted on terrain where manmade construction affects the tactical options available to the commander. An urban area is a topographical complex where manmade construction and the population are the dominant features. Urban terrain confronts commanders with a combination of difficulties rarely found in other environments. Cities vary immensely depending on their history, the cultures of their inhabitants, their economic development, the local climate, available building materials, and many other factors. This variety exists not only among different cities but also within any particular urban area. The urban environment, like all environments, is neutral and affects all sides equally. The side that can best understand and exploit the effects of the urban area has the best chance of success. The following passage illustrates combined-arms operations conducted in an urban combat environment during World War II. It was written by LTC Darrel M. Daniel, commander, 2nd Bn, 26th Inf Regt, October, 1944, Battle of Aachen:

> "The battalion plan of action was as follows: one platoon of Company "F," with a light machine gun section, would stage the initial diversionary attack. It would be supported by two tanks and two tank destroyers, who were instructed to shoot at all or any suspected targets. Observation posts had been manned on a slag pile to support the advance with 81-mm mortar fire...The platoon action was to be the first step...to reduce the town of Aachen.
>
> "...the remainder of our zone of action...would be cleared by Companies "F" and "G," who would execute a flanking attack, jumping off abreast of each other through the area secured by the Company "F" platoon...Preparatory fire by medium artillery was to be planned...Mortar observers would accompany each company...Tanks and tank destroyers were assigned to each company..."

6-1. FUNDAMENTALS OF URBAN OPERATIONS

The fundamentals described in this paragraph apply to UO regardless of the mission or geographical location. Some fundamentals may also apply to operations not conducted in an urban environment but are particularly relevant in an environment dominated by manmade structures and a dense noncombatant population. SBCT and battalion commanders and staffs should use these fundamentals when planning UO.

a. **Perform Focused Information Operations.** Information superiority efforts aimed at influencing non-Army sources of information are critical in UO. Because of the density of noncombatants and information sources, the media, the public, allies, coalition partners, neutral nations, and strategic leadership will likely scrutinize how units participate in UO.

(1) The proliferation of cell phones, Internet capability, and media outlets ensure close observation of unit activities. With information sources rapidly expanding, public information about Army operations will be disseminated rapidly. Units, therefore, should aggressively integrate information operations into every facet and at all levels of the operation to prevent negative impacts.

(2) Under media scrutiny, the actions of a single soldier may have significant strategic implications. The goal of information operations is to ensure that the information available to all interested parties, the public, the media, and other agencies is accurate and placed in the proper context of the Army's mission. (See Appendix K, Media Considerations.)

(3) While many information operations will be planned at levels above the SBCT, tactical units conducting UO may often be involved in the execution of information operations such as military deception, operations security, physical security, and psychological operations. Brigades and battalions must conduct aggressive ISR and security operations that will allow them to properly apply the elements of assess, shape, dominate, and transition to specific UO.

b. **Conduct Close Combat.** Close combat is required in offensive and defensive UO. The capability must be present and visible in stability UO and may be required, by exception, in support UO. Close combat in UO is resource intensive, requires properly trained and equipped forces, has the potential for high casualties, and can achieve decisive results when properly conducted. Units must always be prepared to conduct close combat as part of UO (Figure 6-1).

Figure 6-1. Soldiers conducting close combat in an urban area.

c. **Avoid the Attrition Approach.** Previous doctrine was inclined towards a systematic linear approach to urban combat. This approach placed an emphasis on standoff weapons and firepower. This approach can result in significant collateral damage, a lengthy operation, and be inconsistent with the political situation and strategic objectives. Enemy forces that defend urban areas often want units to adopt this approach because of the likely costs in resources. Commanders should consider this tactical approach to urban combat only when the factors of METT-TC warrant its use.

d. **Control the Essential.** Many modern urban areas are too large to be completely occupied or even effectively controlled. Therefore, units must focus their efforts on controlling only the essentials to mission accomplishment. At a minimum, this requires control of key terrain. In the urban environment, functional, political, or social significance may determine what terrain is considered key or essential. For example, a power station or a building may be key terrain. Units focus on control of the essential facilities or terrain so they can concentrate combat power where it is needed and conserve it. This implies risk in those areas where units choose not to exercise control in order to be able to mass overwhelming power where it is needed.

e. **Minimize Collateral Damage.** Units should use precision standoff fires, information operations, and nonlethal tactical systems to the greatest extent possible consistent with mission accomplishment. Commanders must consider the short- and long-term effects of firepower on the population, the infrastructure, and subsequent missions.

f. **Separate Combatants from Noncombatants.** Promptly separating noncombatants from combatants may make the operation more efficient and diminish some of the enemy's asymmetrical advantages. Separation of noncombatants may also reduce some of the restrictions on the use of firepower and enhance force protection. This important task becomes more difficult when the adversary is an unconventional force and can mix with the civil population.

g. **Restore Essential Services.** Tactical units may have to support a plan for the restoration of essential services that may fail to function upon their arrival or cease to function during an operation. Essential services include power, food, water, sewage, medical, and security. During planning for and the conduct of UO, the commander must use all available assets to minimize collateral damage to potentially vital infrastructure. (See Appendix F, Environmental Concerns and Compliance.)

h. **Preserve Critical Infrastructure.** Commanders and staffs may have to analyze the urban area to identify critical infrastructure. Attempts to preserve the critical elements for post-combat sustainment operations, stability operations, support operations, or the health and well being of the indigenous population may be required. This requirement differs from simply avoiding collateral damage in that units may have to initiate actions to prevent adversaries from removing or destroying infrastructure that will be required in the future. In some cases, preserving critical infrastructure may be the assigned objective of the UO.

i. **Understand the Human Dimension.** The human dimension of the urban environment often has the most significance and greatest potential for affecting the outcome of UO. Commanders will have to carefully consider and manage the allegiance and morale of the civilian population as these can decisively affect operations. The assessment of the urban environment must identify clearly and accurately the attitudes of the urban population toward units. Commanders and staffs must make their assessments based on a thorough understanding and appreciation of the local social and cultural norms. Sound policies, discipline, and consideration will positively affect the attitudes of the population toward Army forces.

j. **Transition Control.** UO of all types are resource intensive and thus commanders must plan to conclude UO expediently yet consistent with successful mission accomplishment. The end state of all UO transfers control of the urban area to another agency or returns it to civilian control. This requires the successful completion of the mission and a thorough transition plan. The transition plan may include returning control of the urban area to another unit or agency a portion at a time as conditions permit.

6-2. GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS OF URBAN OPERATIONS

Throughout history, military planners have viewed cities as centers of gravity and sources of national strength. Cities are population centers; transportation and communication hubs; key nodes of industrial, financial, and information systems; seats of government; and repositories of wealth. Because of the changing nature of society and warfare, deployments into urban environments have become more frequent, and this trend is likely to continue. The purpose of such deployments will be to neutralize or stabilize extremely volatile political situations, to defeat an enemy force that has sought the protection afforded by urban terrain, or to provide assistance to allies in need of support. This chapter provides guidance necessary for planning and executing missions in an urban environment. The SBCT is the primary headquarters around which units are task-organized to perform UO.

a. **Urban Operations.** The increasing world population and accelerated growth of cities makes UO in future conflicts very likely. Operations in urban areas usually occur when--

- The assigned objective lies within an urban area and cannot be bypassed.
- The urban area is key (or decisive) in setting or shaping the conditions for current or future operations.
- The urban area is in the path of a general advance and cannot be surrounded or bypassed.
- Political or humanitarian concerns require the control of an urban area or necessitate operations within it.

- An urban area is between two natural obstacles and cannot be bypassed.
- Defending from urban areas supports a more effective overall defense or cannot be avoided.
- Occupation, seizure, and control of the urban area will deny the enemy control of the urban area and the ability to impose its influence on both friendly military forces and the local civilian population, thereby allowing friendly forces to retain the initiative and dictate the conditions for future operations.

b. **Organization.** The SBCT infantry battalion is well suited for urban operations because of its organizational structure and precision weapons systems, organic MGS platoons, and the numerous infantry-specific tasks associated with urban operations.

c. **Information Superiority.** The digitized SBCT infantry battalion derives considerable advantages from its ABCS equipment. While the MCS and FBCB2 do not depict the multiple levels of urban fighting and do not show precise detail in built-up area (BUA) mapping, their ability to transfer information quickly and to maintain the common operating picture throughout the battalion still represents a notable improvement over analog systems. When linked to a dismounted FBCB2, ABCS greatly enhances the combat effectiveness of Army combined arms teams and battalions in UO.

6-3. THE SBCT INFANTRY BATTALION'S ROLE IN URBAN OPERATIONS

The SBCT infantry battalion achieves tactical decision by means of combined arms at the company level focused on dismounted assault. Combined arms integration is vital to support dismounted operations by squads, platoons, and companies, including dispersed actions. Supported by direct fires from organic weapons systems onboard the ICV and the MGS, the battalion incorporates snipers, COLT fire support teams, mortars, artillery, mobility support, and joint fires and effects to provide the appropriate systems required for this integration. The battalion's core operational capabilities rest upon excellent operational and tactical mobility, enhanced situational understanding, and high infantry dismount strengths for close combat in urban and complex terrain.

a. **Isolation.** An incontrovertible fact in urban operations is that isolation is a key to victory. If the attacker fails to isolate the urban area, the defender can reinforce and resupply his forces, thus protracting the operation and significantly decreasing the attacker's resources and will to continue. If the defender allows himself to be isolated, the attacker seizes the initiative and forces the defender to take high-risk actions (such as a breakout or counterattack) to survive. Mounted forces are optimal for executing isolation operations because they possess the speed, agility, firepower, and protection necessary to shape successfully the urban area for offensive or defensive operations.

b. **Close Combat.** Historically, the close fight in urban combat has consisted of street-to-street fighting resulting in high casualties and high expenditure of resources. Combined arms forces use maneuver and situational understanding to position forces to accomplish their assigned missions in urban environments.

6-4. TACTICAL CHALLENGES

The battalion faces a number of challenges during the planning and execution of UO. The most likely challenges are discussed in the following paragraphs.

a. **Contiguous and Noncontiguous Areas of Operations.** The battalion must be prepared to conduct UO operations in both contiguous and noncontiguous areas of operations.

(1) Contiguous operations are military operations that the battalion conducts in an area of operations that facilitates mutual support of combat, CS, and CSS elements at varying levels. Contiguous operations have traditional linear features including identifiable, contiguous frontages and shared boundaries between forces. For battalions, relatively close distances among adjacent battalions, supporting assets, and subordinate units and elements characterize contiguous operations.

(2) In noncontiguous operations, the battalion may be required to operate independently, removed from SBCT CS and CSS assets by distance and time. Additionally, subordinate companies may operate in isolated pockets, connected only through integrating effects of an effective concept of operations. Noncontiguous operations place a premium on initiative, effective information operations, decentralized security operations, and innovative logistics measures. Noncontiguous operations complicate or hinder mutual support of combat, CS, and CSS elements because of extended distances between subordinate units and elements.

b. **Symmetrical and Asymmetrical Threats.** In addition to being required to face symmetrical enemy threats, the battalion must be prepared to face enemy threats of an asymmetrical nature.

(1) Symmetrical threats are generally "linear" in nature and include those enemy forces that specifically confront the battalion's combat power and capabilities. Examples of symmetrical threats include conventional enemy forces conducting offensive or defensive operations against friendly forces.

(2) Asymmetrical threats are those that are specifically designed to avoid confrontation with the battalion's combat power and capabilities. These threats may use the civilian population and infrastructure to shield their capabilities from battalion fires. Asymmetrical threats are most likely to be based in and target urban areas to take advantage of the density of civilian population and infrastructure. Examples of asymmetrical threats include terrorist attacks, weapons of mass destruction (WMD), electronic warfare (to include computer-based systems), criminal activity, guerilla warfare, and environmental attacks.

c. **Quick Transition from Stability or Support Operations to Combat Operations and Back.** Stability operations, and to a lesser extent support operations, are missions that may escalate to combat. The battalion must always retain the ability to conduct offensive and defensive operations. Preserving the ability to transition allows the battalion to maintain initiative while providing force protection. Commanders should consider planning a defensive contingency with on-order offensive missions in case stability and support operations deteriorate. Subordinate commanders and leaders must be fully trained to recognize activities that would initiate this transition.

d. **Rules of Engagement.** Urban operations are usually conducted against enemy forces fighting in close proximity to civilians. Rules of engagement and other restrictions on the use of combat power are more restrictive than in other conditions of combat. (See FM 3-06.11.)

Section II. MISSION, ENEMY, TERRAIN AND WEATHER, TROOPS AND SUPPORT AVAILABLE, TIME AVAILABLE, AND CIVIL CONSIDERATIONS (METT-TC)

Planning and preparation for UO are generally the same as for operations on open terrain. However, in order for the commander and staff to develop an effective COA, the force must conduct aggressive ISR operations. Urban operations require significant HUMINT reconnaissance because sensors and other technological devices are not as effective in urban environments. ISR operations can take the form of stealthy surveillance teams, tactical questioning of noncombatants, and reconnaissance of key terrain and avenues of approach. Using ISR assets and satellite imagery, the staff can develop urban maps that include a common reference system (such as numbering buildings) to assist subordinate unit C2. The commander and staff must also take into account special considerations when operating in this environment. This section provides special METT-TC considerations for UO.

6-5. MISSION

The battalion must close with and defeat the enemy in order to be decisive in urban operations. Close combat in urban operations is resource intensive, requires properly trained and equipped forces, and has the potential for high casualties. Therefore, the battalion must use close combat as its decisive operation only after shaping the urban area through aggressive reconnaissance and surveillance, isolation, precision fires, and maneuver.

a. **Objective.** The commander and staff must clearly understand the purpose of the operation. The battalion's objective may be terrain- or force-oriented. The commander must consider whether committing his force to combat in urban areas is required or beneficial for achieving his intent.

b. **Intent**. During planning for offensive operations, the commander and staff must consider the overall purpose and intent of the operation and define what is required. For example, the commander must determine if clearing means every building, block by block, or seizure of a key objective, which may require clearing only along the axis of advance. Often, the battalion can integrate urban areas into the defensive scheme to develop a stronger defense.

6-6. ENEMY

The battalion commander and staff must consider the strength, composition, disposition, and activities of the enemy. They must consider both conventional and unconventional enemy forces and the tactics the enemy may employ. Enemy tactics may range from ambushes and snipers to large-scale conventional actions conducted by heavy forces. The IPB must address the known and potential tactics and vulnerabilities of all enemy forces and threats operating within and outside the urban area. The IPB must consider the three-dimensional environment of urban areas: airspace, surface, and subsurface. It should also consider the political, racial, ethnic, tribal, and religious factors that influence the enemy. (See FM 34-130 for a detailed discussion of urban intelligence preparation of the battlefield.)

a. The increasing availability of sophisticated technology has created unorthodox operational approaches that can be exploited by potential opponents. These approaches

seek to counter the technological and numerical advantages of US joint systems and forces and to exploit constraints placed on US forces due to cultural bias, media presence, ROE, and distance from the crisis location.

b. Offsetting their inherent weaknesses, enemy forces seek an advantage in urban terrain to remain dispersed and decentralized, adapting their tactics to provide them the best success in countering a US response. Threats, in addition to conventional forces, may consist of--

- Unconventional forces.
- Paramilitary forces.
- Militia and special police organizations.
- Organized criminal organizations.

These forces range from units equipped with small arms, mortars, machine guns, antiarmor weapons, and mines to very capable mechanized and armor forces equipped with current generation equipment. Urban environments also provide many passive dangers such as disease from unsanitary conditions and psychological illnesses. While the active threats vary widely, many techniques are common to all. The enemy may employ the following seven techniques during urban operations.

(1) ***Use the Population to an Advantage.*** The populace of a given urban area represents key terrain; the side that manages it best has a distinct advantage. Future urban battles may see large segments of the populace remain in place, as they did in Budapest and Grozny. Battalions involved in urban operations must conduct missions in and among the residents of the area.

(a) Enemy forces may use the population to provide camouflage, concealment, and deception for their operations. Guerilla and terrorist elements may look no different than any other members of the community. Even conventional and paramilitary troops may have a "civilian" look. Western military forces adopted the clean-shaven, close-cut hair standard at the end of the nineteenth century to combat disease and infection, but twenty-first century opponents might very well sport beards as well as civilian-looking clothing and other "nonmilitary" characteristics.

(b) The civilian population may also provide cover for enemy forces, enhancing their mobility close to friendly positions. Enemy forces may take advantage of US moral responsibilities and attempt to make the civilian population a burden on the Army's logistical and force protection resources. They may herd refugees into friendly controlled sectors, steal from US-paid local nationals, and hide among civilians during offensive operations.

(c) The civilian population may also serve as an important intelligence source for the enemy. Local hires serving among US soldiers, civilians with access to base camp perimeters, and refugees moving through friendly controlled sectors may be manipulated by enemy forces to provide information on friendly dispositions, readiness, and intent. In addition, enemy special purpose forces and hostile intelligence service assets may move among well-placed civilian groups.

(2) ***Win the Information War.*** Enemy forces may try to win the information war in direct opposition to the battalion's operations.

(a) Portable video cameras, Internet access, commercial radios, and cellular telephones are all tools that permit enemy forces to tell their story. American "atrocities" may be staged and broadcast. Electronic mail may be transmitted to sympathetic groups

to help undermine resolve. Internet websites provide easy worldwide dissemination of enemy propaganda and misinformation. Hackers may gain access to US sites to manipulate information to the enemy's advantage.

(b) The enemy may make skillful use of the news media. Insurgent campaigns, for example, need not be tactical military successes; they need only make the opposition's campaign appear unpalatable to gain domestic and world support. The media coverage of the Tet Offensive of 1968 affected the will of both the American people and their political leadership. Although the battle for Hue was a tactical victory for the US, the North Vietnamese clearly achieved strategic success by searing the American consciousness with the high costs of urban warfare. (See Appendix K, Media Considerations.)

(3) ***Manipulate Key Facilities.*** Enemy forces may identify and quickly seize control of critical components of the urban area to help them shape the battlespace to their own ends. Telephone exchanges provide simple and reliable communications that can be easily secured with off-the-shelf technologies. Sewage treatment plants and flood control machinery can be used to implement WMD strategies or to make sections of the urban area uninhabitable. Media stations significantly improve the information operations position of the controlling force. Power generation and transmission sites provide means to control significant aspects of civilian society over a large area.

(4) ***Use the Three Dimensions of Urban Terrain.*** The enemy thinks and operates throughout all dimensions of the urban environment. Upper floors and roofs provide the urban enemy forces excellent observation points and battle positions above the maximum elevation of many weapons. Shots from upper floors strike friendly armored vehicles in vulnerable points. Basements also provide firing points below many weapons' minimum depressions and strike at weaker armor. Sewers and subways provide covered and concealed access throughout the area of operations. Conventional lateral boundaries often do not apply as enemy forces control some stories of a building while friendly forces control others floors in the same building.

(5) ***Employ Urban-Oriented Weapons.*** Whether they are purpose-built or adapted, many weapons may have greater than normal utility in an urban environment while others may have significant disadvantages. Urban enemy weapons are much like the nature of urbanization and the urban environment: inventive and varied. Small, man-portable weapons, along with improvised munitions, can dominate the urban environment. Examples of enemy weapons favored in UO include--

- Weapons with no minimum depression or no maximum elevation.
- Weapons with little of no backblast (gas-metered, soft launch, and so on).
- Mortars.
- Sniper rifles. (See appendix C, Sniper Employment.)
- Machine guns.
- Grenades.
- Grenade launchers.
- Flame and incendiary weapons.
- Rocket-propelled grenades (RPGs) and other shoulder-fired antitank guided missiles (ATGMs).
- Riot control and tranquilizer agents.
- Mines and boobytraps.

(6) ***Engage the Entire Enemy Force.*** Enemy forces may "hug" battalions operating in an urban area to avoid the effects of high-firepower standoff weapon systems. They may also try to keep all or significant portions of the battalion engaged in continuous operations to increase the battalion's susceptibility to combat stress. UO, by their nature, produce an inordinate amount of combat stress casualties, and continuous operations exacerbate this problem. (See Appendix L, Continuous Operations.) The enemy may maintain a large reserve to minimize the impact of this on their own forces.

(7) ***Focus Attacks on Service Support and Unprotected Soldiers.*** Enemy forces may prey on soldiers poorly trained in basic infantry skills. Ambushes may focus on these soldiers while they are conducting resupply operations or moving in poorly guarded convoys. Urban operations are characterized by the isolation of small groups and navigational challenges, and the enemy may use the separation this creates to inflict maximum casualties even when there is no other direct military benefit from the action.

6-7. URBAN MAPPING

Prior to entering an urban environment, the battalion obtains or develops urban maps to assist in C2. The SBCT should attempt to gain access to city planner or civil engineer maps to provide detailed information of the urban area. The urban maps, whether digital or sketched, include a reference system to identify buildings and streets (Figure 6-2). Naming conventions should be simple to allow for ease of navigation and orientation in the urban environment (odd number buildings on left side of street, even numbers on right side). Street names should not be used as references because the enemy can remove or change street signs to confuse friendly forces.

a. Initial map and aerial photograph reconnaissance can identify key terrain and other important locations in the AO.

(1) ***Safe Havens.*** Safe havens include areas such as--

- Hospitals.
- Police stations.
- Embassies.
- Other (friendly) facilities.

(2) ***Hazardous Areas.*** Hazardous areas such as--

- Construction sites.
- Dangerous intersections.
- Bridges.
- Criminal areas.

(3) ***Major Terrain Features.*** Major terrain features such as--

- Parks.
- Industrial complexes.
- Airports.

(4) Subterranean Features. Subterranean features such as--

- Sewers and utility systems.
- Subway systems.
- Underground water systems.

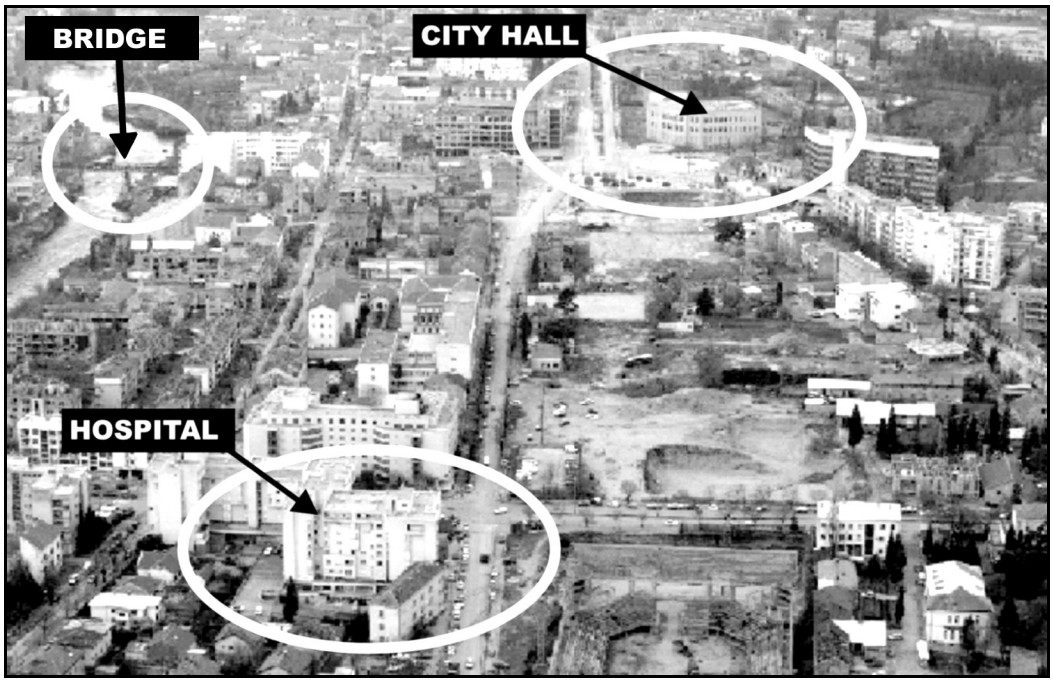

Figure 6-2. Initial photo reconnaissance of urban area of operations.

b. The urban map also facilitates control by providing a tool for tracking units in greater detail and obtaining precise location updates when digital systems (which produce the common operating picture) may be affected by urban terrain. The battalion uses ISR assets to confirm and update their urban maps. These improved maps are critical since most existing maps do not provide the level of detail necessary to conduct tactical operations. Specifically, the SBCT assesses avenues of approach in the urban AO. Included with the maps are overlays that categorize sections of the urban area by ethnicity, religious affiliation, and other prevailing characteristics that could affect operations (Figures 6-3 through 6-6, pages 6-12 through 6-15).

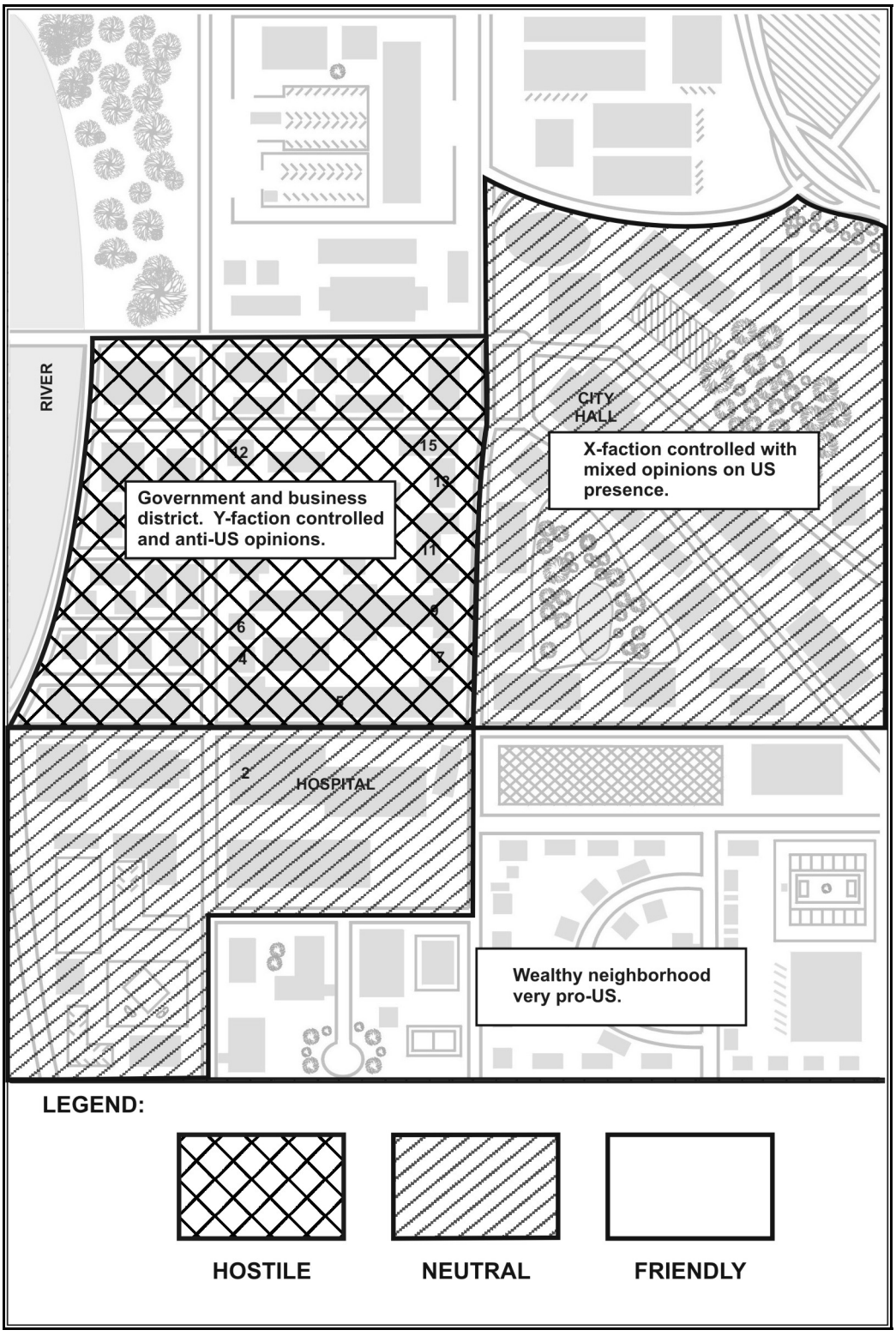

Figure 6-3. Example of population status overlay.

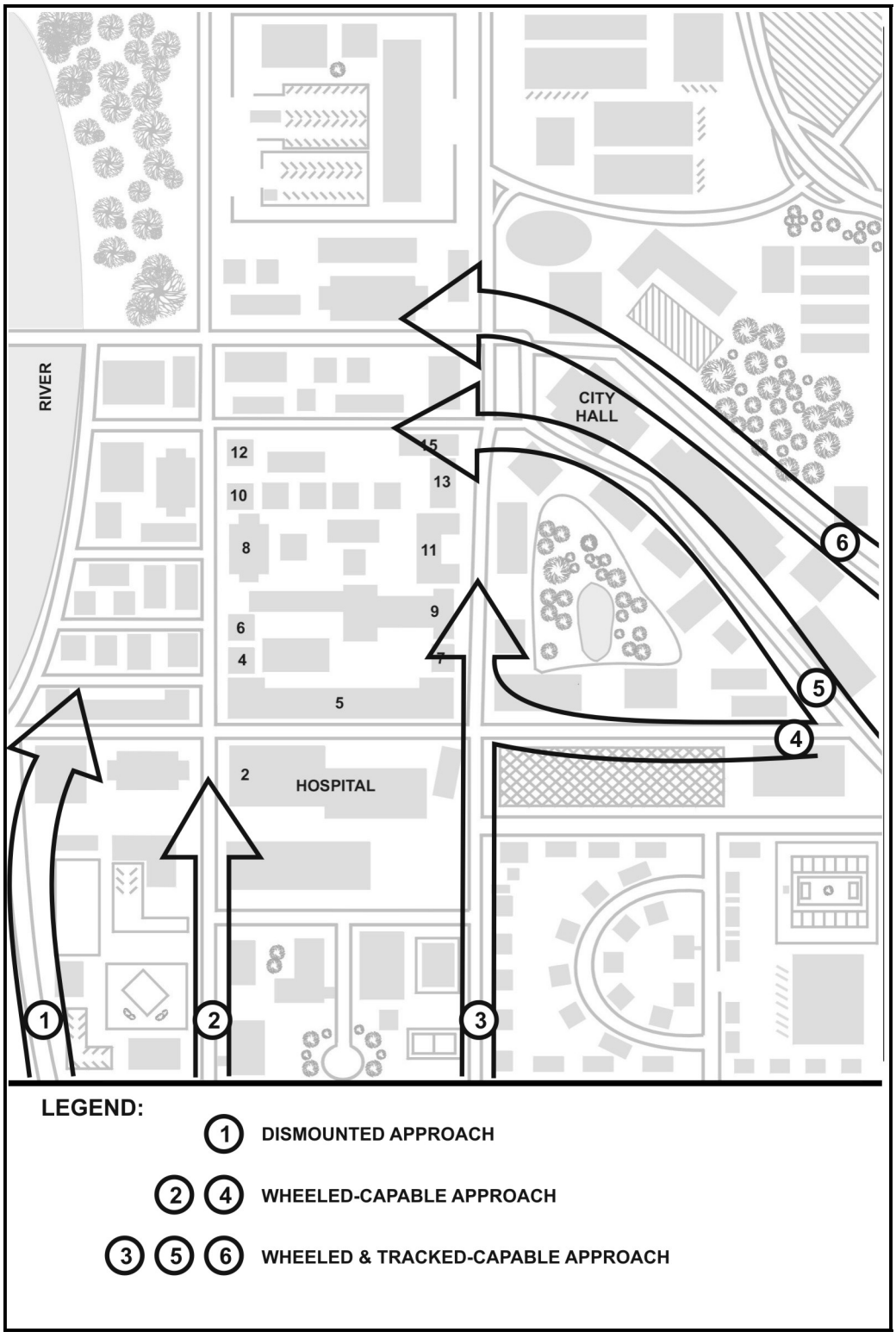

Figure 6-4. Avenues of approach in the urban area.

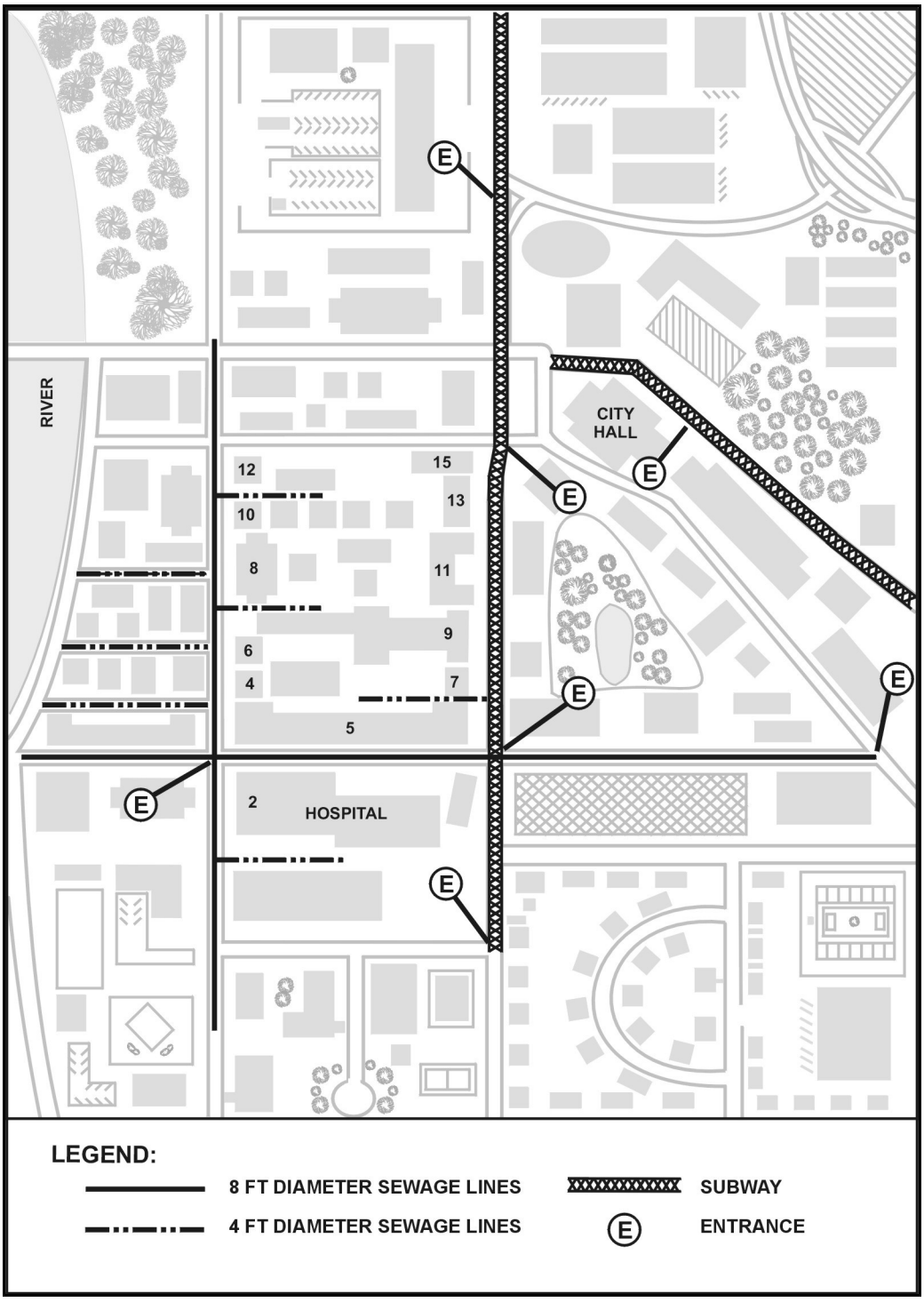

Figure 6-5. Sewer and subterranean overlay.

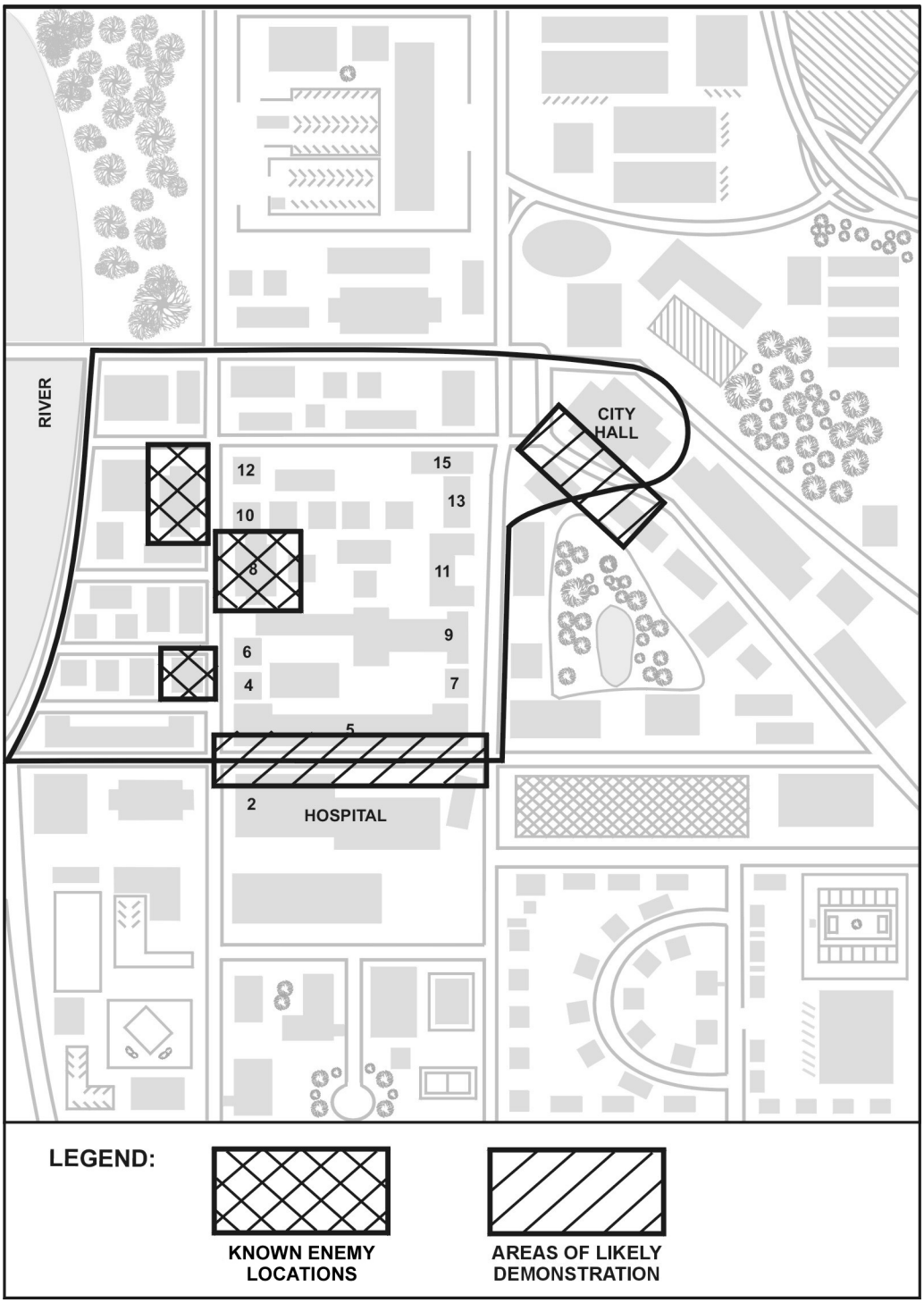

Figure 6-6. Enemy overlay.

6-8. TERRAIN AND WEATHER

An urban area is a concentration of structures, facilities, and people that form the economic and cultural focus for the surrounding area. Battalion operations are affected by all categories of urban areas (Table 6-1, page 6-16). Cities, metropolises, and megalopolises with associated urban sprawl cover hundreds of square kilometers.

Battalions normally operate in these urban areas as part of a larger force. Extensive combat in these urban areas involves units of division level and above.

Villages (Population of 3,000 inhabitants or less)	The battalion's AO may contain many villages. Battalions and companies bypass, move through, defend from, and attack objectives within villages as a normal part of SBCT operations.
Towns (Population over 3000 up to 100,000 inhabitants)	Operations in such areas normally involve brigade-sized or larger units. Battalions may bypass, move through, defend in, or attack enemy forces in towns as part of division operations. Operations in these areas normally require the full commitment of the SBCT or higher echelon formations.
Cities (Population of 100,000 to 1 million inhabitants)	Extensive combat in large cities involves divisions and larger formations. Battalions may fight adjacent to, on the edges of, or inside cities.
Metropolis (Population over 1 million to 10 million)	Extensive combat in large cities involves divisions and larger formations. Battalions may fight adjacent to, on the edges of, or inside cities.
Megalopolis (Population over 10 million inhabitants**)**	Extensive combat in large cities involves divisions and larger formations. Battalions may fight adjacent to, on the edges of, or inside cities.

Table 6-1. Categories of urban areas.

a. **Terrain.** A detailed analysis of the urban area and surrounding terrain is vital to the success of any operation in an urban area (see FM 34-130 and FM 3-06.11). The battalion commander must understand the elements of the urban infrastructure that are necessary for achieving the intent and end state of the SBCT's mission. Military maps normally do not provide sufficient detail for terrain analysis of an urban area. Recent aerial photographs and other current intelligence products are critical. Maps and diagrams of the city from other sources, such as local governments, tourist activities, or law enforcement services, can be useful. Products that can be developed by the National Imagery Mapping Agency (NIMA) can be specifically tailored for the area of operations.

(1) The S2 should obtain maps and diagrams of the following:

- Subway systems, railways, and mass transit routes.
- Underground water, sewer, and utility systems.
- Electrical distribution systems, power stations, and emergency services.
- Fuel supply and storage facilities.
- Facilities for mass communications, such as cellular phones, computer hubs, radio, and telephone.
- Public administration buildings, hospitals, and clinics.

(2) The terrain analysis should also identify the following:

- Structural characteristics of buildings, bridges, and transportation networks.
- Roads, highways, rivers, streams, and other waterways that may be used as high-speed avenues of approach.

- Analysis of the natural terrain surrounding the urban area (observation and fields of fire, avenues of approach, key terrain, obstacles, and cover and concealment [OAKOC]).
- Analysis of the urban area itself to include street patterns, structure types, and available maneuver space (see FM 34-130).
- Covered and concealed approaches to the urban area.
- Key and decisive terrain inside and outside of the urban area.
- Identification of buildings, areas, or facilities protected by the law of land warfare or restricted by current ROE (such as churches, medical facilities, historic monuments, and other facilities dedicated to arts and sciences), provided they are not being used for military purposes (see FM 27-10).
- Stadiums, parks, open fields, playgrounds, and other open areas that may be used for landing zones or holding areas.
- Location of prisons and jails.
- Potential host nation support facilities such as quarries, lumber yards, major building supply companies, and warehouses.
- Power lines, telephone lines, and raised cables that may be hazards to helicopters.
- Significant fire hazards and locations of other toxic industrial materials (TIM).
- Weather effect products from topographic models or historical sources (for example, effects of heavy rains on local areas).

(3) A close relationship with the local government and military forces can be very beneficial. They can provide information about population, fire-fighting capabilities, locations of TIM, police and security capabilities, civilian evacuation plans, location of key facilities, and possibly current enemy activities. They may also be able to provide translators.

(4) An infrastructure analysis of the urban area is also important. Because urban infrastructures vary greatly, a comprehensive list cannot be provided. However, common characteristics include--

- Urban street patterns and trafficability.
- Sources of potable water.
- Bulk fuel and transport systems.
- Communications systems.
- Rail networks, airfields, canals and waterways, and other transportation systems.
- Industries.
- Power (to include nuclear) and chemical production facilities and public utilities.

b. **Weather.** Weather analyses that are important to battalion operations include visibility, winds, precipitation, and temperature and humidity.

(1) ***Visibility.*** Light data have special significance during urban operations. Night and periods of reduced visibility (including fog) favor surprise, infiltration, detailed reconnaissance, attacks across open areas, seizure of defended strong points, and reduction of defended obstacles. However, the difficulties of night navigation in

restricted terrain forces the battalion to rely on simple maneuver plans with easily recognizable objectives.

(2) ***Winds.*** Wind chill is not as pronounced in urban areas. However, the configuration of streets, especially in close orderly block and high-rise areas, can cause wind canalization.

(3) ***Precipitation.*** Rain or melting snow often floods basements and subterranean areas, such as subways, and also makes storm and other sewer systems hazardous or impassable. Chemical agents and other TIM are washed into underground systems by precipitation.

(4) ***Temperature and Humidity.*** Air inversion layers are common over cities, especially cities located in low-lying "bowls" or in river valleys. Inversion layers trap dust, chemical agents, and other pollutants, reducing visibility and often creating a greenhouse effect, which causes a rise in ground and air temperature. The heating of buildings during the winter and the reflection and absorption of summer heat make urban areas warmer than surrounding open areas during both summer and winter. This difference can be as great as 10 to 20 degrees and can reduce the effects of thermal sights and imaging systems.

6-9. TROOPS AND SUPPORT AVAILABLE

During UO, the battalion is often augmented with additional assets, which may include engineers, ADA, and light infantry. Army aviation, FA, MP, public affairs, PSYOP, civilian affairs, smoke, decontamination, and long-range surveillance (LRS) assets, when available, may also support the battalion under SBCT control. (Refer to paragraph 6-14, page 6-21 and Figure 6-7, page 6-22, for a sample task organization. Actual task organizations depend on the factors of METT-TC.)

a. **Troop Density, Equipment, and Ammunition.** Troop density for offensive missions in urban areas can be as much as three to five times greater than for similar missions in open terrain. Troops require additional equipment such as ladders, ropes, grappling hooks, and other entry equipment. The ammunition consumption rates for small arms, grenades (all types), Claymore mines, antitank guided missiles, .50 caliber, MK19 and 120-mm HE, and explosives can be four times the normal rate. The staff must ensure the continuous supply of Classes I, III, V, and VIII and water to forward units. Supplies should be configured for immediate use and delivered as far forward as possible to supported units.

b. **Stress**. The commander and staff must consider the effects of prolonged combat on soldiers. Continuous close combat produces high psychological stress and physical fatigue. Rotating units committed to combat for long periods can reduce stress. Leaders should take extra effort and time to train and psychologically prepare soldiers for this type of combat. (See Appendix L, Continuous Operations.)

c. **Discipline**. Maintaining discipline is especially important in UO. All commanders must ensure their soldiers understand and follow the established ROE. The law of land warfare prohibits unnecessary injury to noncombatants and needless damage to property. This prohibition may restrict the commander's use of certain weapons, munitions, and tactics.

6-10. TIME

Combat in urban areas has a slower tempo and an increased use of methodical, synchronized missions. In planning UO, the commander and staff must take these factors into account. Planning must allow more time for thorough reconnaissance, subordinate unit rehearsals, sniper and countersniper operations, demolitions, breaching, fire fighting, entry and movement techniques, fighting position construction, booby trap recognition and neutralization, combat lifesaver training, and crowd control.

6-11. CIVIL CONSIDERATIONS

The commander and staff must understand the composition, activities, and attitudes of the civilian population within the urban area, to include the political infrastructure. Various options are available to the commander to control the impact of civilians on the operation. These include screening civilians, prohibiting unauthorized movement, diverting or controlling refugee movements, and evacuating. Understanding the urban society requires comprehension of--

- Living conditions.
- Cultural distinctions.
- Ethnicity.
- Factions.
- Religious beliefs.
- Political affiliation and grievances.
- Attitudes toward US forces (friendly, hostile, or neutral).

a. **Curfew and Evacuation.** A commander with the mission of defending an urban area may need to establish a curfew to maintain security or to aid in control of military traffic. (Curfews are not imposed as punishment. They are normally established to reduce noncombatant casualties and provide a measure of force protection.) A commander can require civilians to evacuate towns or buildings if the purpose of the evacuation is to use the town or building for imperative military purposes, to enhance security, or to safeguard those civilians being evacuated. If the commander takes this action, he must specify and safeguard the evacuation routes. Battalions may also be involved in securing routes and possibly safeguarding food, clothing, medical, and sanitary facilities. Evacuated civilians must be transferred back to their homes as soon as hostilities in the area have ceased. The staff must plan for and coordinate the movement and evacuation of civilians to ensure their actions do not interfere with the military operation. The battalion staff and supporting civil affairs units working with local officials coordinate the movements of civilians.

b. **Resistance Groups.** The battalion may encounter civilian resistance groups whose actions may range from providing the enemy with supplies, services, and noncombat support to actively fighting against friendly forces. Members of such resistance groups should be dealt with in accordance with applicable provisions of the law of war. Commanders should seek guidance from the judge advocate general (JAG) concerning the detention and disposition of persons participating in acts harmful to friendly forces. The S2 must work with PSYOP and civil affairs units to identify these threats and recommend, within the ROE, the appropriate preemptive action or response. The activities of resistance groups may also benefit friendly forces. They may be a potential source for TAC HUMINT assets; act as guides, liaisons, or translators; and

provide subject-matter expertise on local public facilities such as refineries, power plants, and water works. They may also provide active resistance against the enemy.

Section III. CONTROLLING OPERATIONS

Urban operations require centralized planning and decentralized execution; therefore, the staff must develop a detailed plan that synchronizes the battle operating systems in order to meet the commander's intent and provide subordinate units with the means to accomplish the mission.

6-12. ENEMY FOCUS

During the mission analysis, the plan should focus on the factors of METT-TC. The commander orients the plan on the enemy rather than terrain. He uses terrain factors to defeat the enemy. Considerations include, but are not limited to, the following:

a. Thorough evaluation of the urban area's related terrain and enemy force may take much longer than in other environments. This time factor also affects friendly planning efforts.

b. Determine the enemy's location, strength, and capabilities. Develop a plan that defeats his direct and indirect fire systems.

c. Focus the axis of advance on the enemy's weaknesses while maintaining adequate force protection measures. When possible, employ multiple and supporting axes of advance.

d. Divide the objective area into manageable smaller areas that facilitate company maneuver.

e. Isolate the objective area and establish a foothold at the point of entry. The location chosen for the foothold must allow for expansion.

f. The SBCT and battalion maneuver plans directly affect the company schemes of maneuver. Every platoon within the battalion must know what enemy targets will be engaged by SBCT and battalion assets.

6-13. COMMANDER'S CRITICAL INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS

The commander's critical information requirements directly affect his decisions and dictate the successful execution of tactical operations. The battalion staff must develop the components of the CCIR that facilitate the commander's ability to make decisions affecting the plan during urban operations. Essential elements of friendly information address the enemy commander's priority intelligence requirements. Friendly forces information requirements are items that cause the commander to make decisions that affect the plan. The following are examples of PIR, EEFI, and FFIR that would help the commander in an urban environment.

a. **Priority Information Requirements.** These are intelligence requirements that a commander has anticipated and that have stated priority in task planning and decision making. Examples include--

- Is the enemy using AA1 to infiltrate into the battalion area of operations?
- Does mobility corridor three (Third Street) restrict movement of friendly armored and wheeled vehicles?

- Is there an enemy strongpoint located between 3rd Street and 5th Street along 3rd Avenue?
- Does the enemy have ADA assets positioned along air AA2?

b. **Essential Elements of Friendly Information.** These are critical aspects of a friendly operation that, if known by the enemy, would subsequently compromise, lead to failure, or limit the success of the operation. Therefore, they must be protected from detection. Examples include--

- Have any of the battalion command nets been compromised?
- Has my LOC been disrupted, and where?
- Has the enemy located my Q36?

c. **Friendly Forces Information Requirements.** This is information the commander and staff need about the friendly forces available for the operation. Examples include--

- Reconnaissance elements captured or compromised.
- Main bridge locations along the ground route that have been destroyed.
- OPORD compromised.
- Loss of cryptographic equipment.
- Expected personnel and equipment replacements that did not arrive.

6-14. TASK-ORGANIZATION OF UNITS TO ACCOMPLISH SPECIFIC TASKS

Urban operations may require unique task organizations. For example, urban operations provide one of the few situations where infantry and armor elements may be effectively task-organized below platoon levels. Battalion commanders must consider providing assets where they will be needed to accomplish specific tasks. All phases of mission execution must be considered when developing task organization. Changes in task organization may be required to accomplish different tasks during mission execution. Figure 6-7, page 6-22, depicts a sample task organization for an SBCT infantry battalion conducting offensive urban operations that consist of a main effort, two supporting efforts, and a reserve.

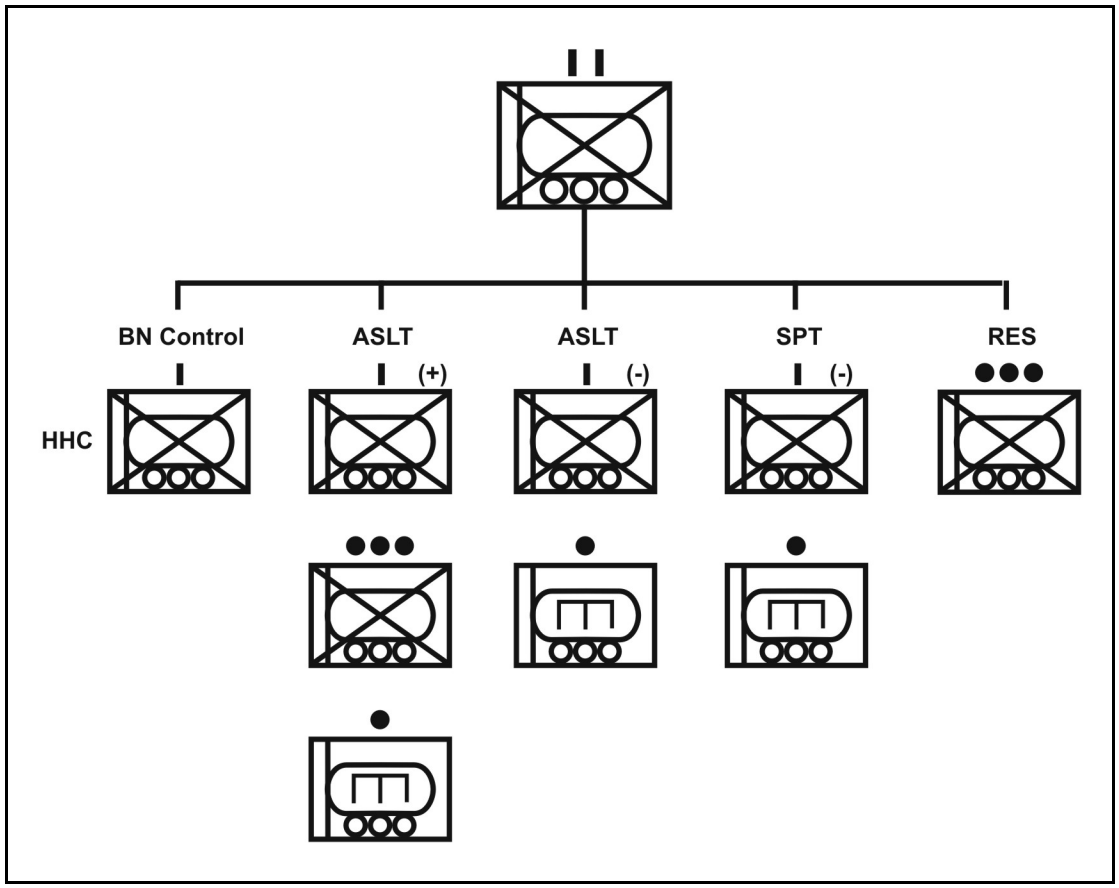

Figure 6-7. Sample offensive task organization.

NOTE: The task organization shown in Figure 6-7 may change after the assault when the battalion reorganizes for follow-on missions.

6-15. REHEARSALS

After developing a thorough, well-synchronized plan, battalion commanders should require subordinate units to conduct combined-arms rehearsals at the levels at which the operations will occur, to include all phases of the operation. When conducted properly, combined-arms rehearsals identify potential problems in the synchronization of the plan between maneuver, combat support, and combat service support elements. Rehearsals provide a means for units that seldom operate together to train collective skills. Rehearsals should start early in the troop-leading process. Some rehearsals can start shortly after receipt of warning orders. Subordinate units can rehearse drills, such as breaching, clearing buildings, and moving between buildings, before receiving a detailed plan. Infantry can also rehearse aspects of operating close to armored vehicles. The battalion commander and staff must allocate sufficient time to subordinate units to conduct rehearsals. Rehearsals for subordinate units to consider include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Communications procedures.
- Direct fire control plan.
- Fires and effects.

- Breaching.
- Maneuver.

6-16. FIRE SUPPORT

Often, the role of fires in UO is to get the maneuver force into or around the urban area with minimal casualties so that the commander has the maximum combat power to close with the enemy and finish the fight. Civil affairs and PSYOP assets should be coordinated with the appropriate command and control warfare or information operations planning headquarters.

6-17. FIELD ARTILLERY

Appropriate fire support coordination measures are essential because fighting in urban areas results in opposing forces fighting in close combat. When planning for fire support in an urban area, the battalion S3 and FSO should consider the following:

a. Target acquisition may be more difficult because of the increased cover and concealment afforded by the terrain. Ground observation is limited in urban areas. Adjusting fires is difficult since buildings block the view of adjusting rounds; therefore, the lateral method of adjustment may be most useful.

b. Initial rounds are adjusted laterally until a round impacts on the street perpendicular to the FEBA. Airburst rounds are best for this adjustment. The adjustments must be made by sound. When rounds impact on the perpendicular street, they are adjusted for range. When the range is correct, a lateral shift is made onto the target, and the gunner fires for effect.

c. Special considerations apply to shell and fuze combinations when buildings limit effects of munitions:

- Careful use of variable time (VT) is required to avoid premature arming.
- Indirect fires may create unwanted rubble and collateral damage.
- The close proximity of enemy and friendly troops requires careful coordination.
- White phosphorous may create unwanted fires and smoke.
- Fuze delay should be used to penetrate fortifications.
- Illumination rounds can be effective; however, friendly positions should remain in shadows and enemy positions should be highlighted. Tall buildings may mask the effects of illumination rounds.
- VT, time, and improved conventional munitions (ICMs) are effective for clearing enemy positions, observers, and antennas off rooftops.
- Swirling winds may degrade smoke operations.
- Scatterable mines may be used to impede enemy movements. SCATMINE effectiveness is reduced when delivered on a hard surface.

d. Target acquisition is difficult in urban terrain because the enemy has many covered and concealed positions and movement lanes. The enemy may be on rooftops, in buildings, and in sewer and subway systems. Aerial observers are extremely valuable for targeting because they can see deep to detect movements, positions on rooftops, and fortifications. Targets should be planned on rooftops to clear away enemy FOs as well as communications and radar equipment. Targets should also be planned on major roads, at road intersections, and on known or likely enemy positions. Consider employing artillery

in the direct fire mode to destroy fortifications, especially when assaulting well-prepared enemy positions. Also, restrictive fire support coordination measures, such as a restrictive fire area or no-fire area, may be needed to protect civilians and critical installations.

e. M198 155-mm howitzers are effective in neutralizing concrete targets with direct fire. Concrete-piercing 155-mm rounds can penetrate 36 inches of concrete at ranges up to 2,200 meters. The mounted .50-caliber machine gun can also be used as direct fire support. Howitzers must be closely protected by infantry when used in the direct-fire mode since they do not have any significant protection for their crews.

f. Forward observers must be able to determine where and how large the dead spaces are. This area is a safe haven for the enemy because he is protected from indirect fires. For low-angle artillery, the dead space is about five times the height of the building. For high-angle artillery, the dead space is about one half the height of the building.

g. Aerial observers are effective for seeing behind buildings immediately to the front of friendly forces. They are extremely helpful when using the ladder method of adjustment because they may actually see the adjusting rounds impact behind buildings. Aerial observers can also relay calls for fire when communications are degraded due to power lines or masking by buildings.

h. Radar can locate many artillery and mortar targets in an urban environment because of the high percentage of high-angle fires. If radar is sited too close behind tall buildings, it loses some effectiveness.

i. The use of airburst fires is an effective means of clearing snipers from rooftops.

6-18. MORTARS

Mortars are the most responsive indirect fires available to infantry commanders and leaders. Their mission is to provide close and immediate fire support to the maneuver units. Mortars are well suited for combat in urban areas because of their high rate of fire, steep angle of fall, and short minimum range. Commanders must ensure that mortar support is integrated into all fire support plans. (See FM 3-06.11 for detailed information on the tactical employment of mortars in the urban fight.)

a. **Role of Mortar Units.** The role of mortar units is to deliver suppressive fires to support maneuver, especially against dismounted infantry. Mortars can be used to obscure, neutralize, suppress, or illuminate during urban combat. Mortar fires inhibit enemy fires and movement, allowing friendly forces to maneuver to a position of advantage. The most common and valuable use for mortars is often harassment and interdiction fires. One of their greatest contributions is interdicting supplies, evacuation efforts, and reinforcement in the enemy rear just behind his forward defensive positions. During World War II and the recent Middle East conflicts, light mortar HE fires have been used extensively during urban combat to deny the use of streets, parks, and plazas to enemy personnel. Finally, mortars can be used, with some limitations, against light armor and structures. Effectively integrating mortar fires with dismounted maneuver is key to successful combat in an urban area.

b. **Position Selection.** The selection of mortar positions depends on the size of buildings, the size of the urban area, and the mission. Rubble can be used to construct a parapet for firing positions. Positions are also selected to lessen counterbattery fire

(1) ***Existing Structures and Masking.*** The use of existing structures (for example, garages, office buildings, or highway overpasses) for positions is recommended to afford

the best protection and lessen the camouflage effort. Proper masking enhances survivability. If the mortar is fired in excess of 885 mils to clear a frontal mask, the enemy counterbattery threat is reduced. These principles are used in both the offense and the defense.

(2) ***Placement.*** Mortars are not usually placed on top of buildings because lack of cover and mask makes them vulnerable. They should not be placed inside buildings with damaged roofs unless the structure's stability has been checked. Overpressure can injure personnel, and the shock on the floor can weaken or collapse the structure.

c. **Communications.** Digital and analog communication transmissions in urban areas are likely to be erratic. Structures reduce radio ranges; however, remoting the antennas to upper floors or roofs may improve communications and enhance operator survivability. The use of radio retransmissions is another technique that may apply in urban areas. A practical solution is to use existing civilian systems to supplement the unit's capability, understanding that this is a non-secure method of communication. Hard wire communication may be the most suitable means of communication in an urban environment.

d. **Magnetic Interference.** In an urban environment, all magnetic instruments are affected by surrounding structural steel, electrical cables, and automobiles.

e. **High-Explosive Ammunition.** Mortar high-explosive fires are used more than any other type of indirect fire weapon during urban combat. Although mortar fires are often targeted against roads and other open areas, the natural dispersion of indirect fires will result in many hits on buildings. Leaders must use care when planning mortar fires during UO to minimize collateral damage.

(1) HE ammunition, especially the 120-mm projectile, gives good results when used against lightly built structures within cities. However, it does not perform well against reinforced concrete found in larger urban areas.

(2) When using HE ammunition in urban fighting, only point detonating fuzes should be used. The use of proximity fuzes should normally be avoided because the nature of urban areas causes proximity fuzes to function prematurely. Proximity fuzes, however, are useful in attacking some targets such as OPs on tops of buildings.

f. **Illumination.** In the offense, illuminating rounds are planned to burst above the objective. If the illumination were behind the objective, the enemy troops would be in the shadows rather than in the light. In the defense, illumination is planned to burst behind friendly troops to put them in the shadows and place the enemy troops in the light. Buildings reduce the effectiveness of the illumination by creating shadows. Continuous illumination requires close coordination between the FO and FDC to produce the proper effect by bringing the illumination over the defensive positions as the enemy troops approach the buildings (Figure 6-8, page 6-26).

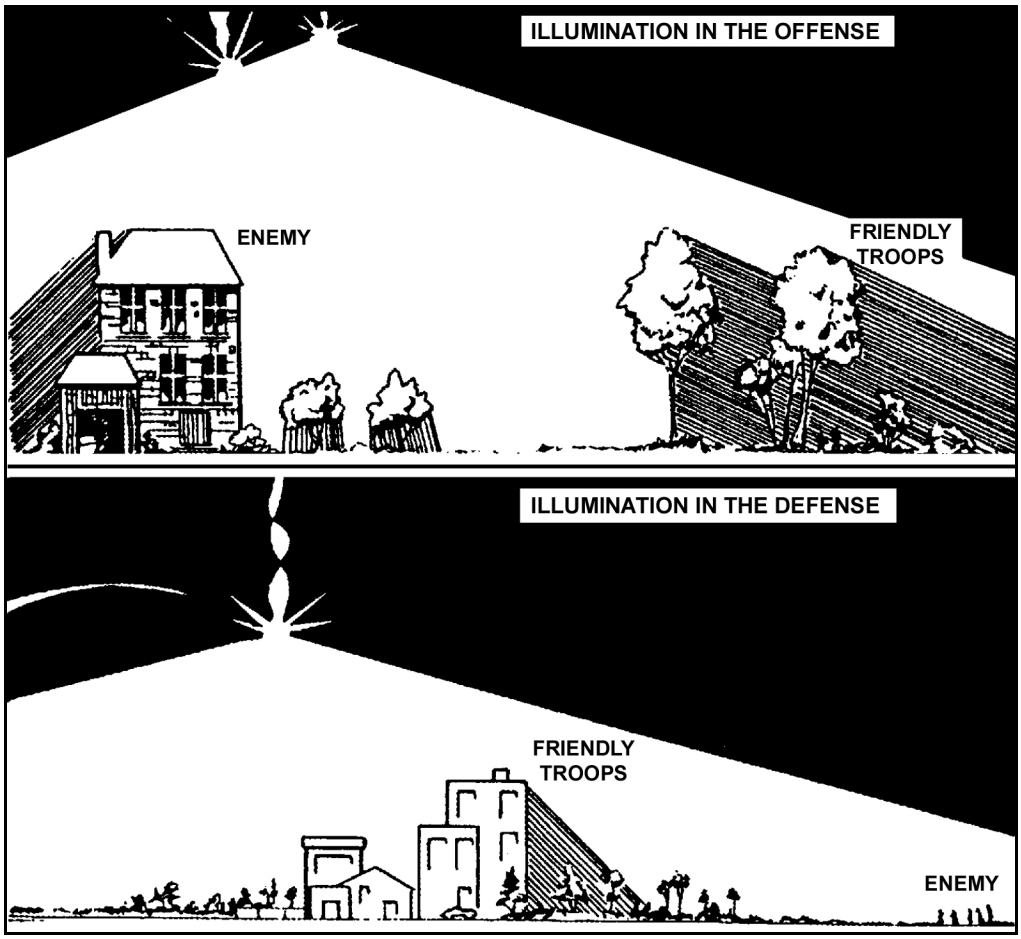

Figure 6-8. Illumination during urban operations.

g. **Special Considerations.** When planning the use of mortars, commanders must consider the following:

- Observer positioning.
- Ammunition effects to include white phosphorous and red phosphorous and the effects of obscurants.
- Dead space.
- Security for mortar crews.
- Displace of the mortars.

6-19. COMMUNICATIONS

One of the biggest challenges for a battalion staff is to maintain communications with subordinate elements. Buildings and electrical power lines reduce the range of digital and FM radios. Remoting radio sets or placing antennas on rooftops can solve the range problem for CPs and trains. Companies do not have the assets to ensure continuous communications, so the battalion staff must plan for continual movement of battalion assets to support company operations.

a. **Wire.** Wire is a secure and effective means of communications in urban areas. Wires should be laid underground, overhead on existing poles, or through buildings to prevent vehicles from cutting them.

b. **Messengers and Visual Signals.** Messengers and visual signals can also be used in urban areas. Messengers must plan routes that avoid the enemy. Routes and time schedules should be varied to avoid establishing a pattern. Visual signals must be planned so they can be seen from the buildings.

c. **Sound.** Sound signals are normally not effective in urban areas due to the amount of surrounding noise.

d. **Existing Systems.** If existing civilian or military communications facilities can be captured intact, they can also be used by the battalion. An operable civilian phone system, for instance, can provide a reliable, although nonsecure, means of communication. Use of news media channels in the immediate area of operations for other-than-emergency communications must also be coordinated through the S1 or civil affairs officer.

6-20. WEAPONS EFFECTS

The characteristics and nature of combat in urban areas affect the results and employment of weapons. Leaders at all levels must consider the following factors in various combinations.

a. **Surfaces.** Hard, smooth, flat surfaces are characteristic of urban targets. Rarely do rounds impact perpendicular to these flat surfaces but rather at some angle of obliquity. This reduces the effect of a round and increases the threat of ricochets.

b. **Ranges and Engagement Time.** Engagement times are short, and ranges are close in urban areas. About 90 percent of all targets are located 50 meters or less from the identifying soldier. Minimum arming ranges and troop safety from backblast or fragmentation effects must be considered.

c. **Depression and Elevation Limits.** Depression and elevation limits for some weapons create dead space. Tall buildings form deep canyons that are often safe from indirect fires. Some weapons can fire rounds to ricochet behind cover and inflict casualties. Target engagement from horizontal and vertical oblique angles demands superior marksmanship skills.

d. **Obscuration.** Smoke from burning buildings, dust from explosions, shadows from tall buildings, and the lack of light penetrating inner rooms combine to reduce visibility and increase a sense of isolation. Added to this is the masking of fires caused by rubble and manmade structures. Targets, even those at close range, tend to be indistinct.

e. **Confusion.** Urban fighting often becomes confused melees with several small units attacking on converging axes. The risks from friendly fires, ricochets, and fratricide must be considered during planning. Control measures must be continually adjusted to lower the risks. Soldiers and leaders must maintain a sense of situational understanding and clearly mark their progress IAW unit SOP to avoid fratricide. (See Appendix E, Risk Management and Fratricide Avoidance.)

f. **Buildings.** Both the shooter and target may be inside or outside the buildings. They may both be inside the same or separate buildings. The enclosed nature of combat in urban areas means the weapon's effect, such as muzzle blast or backblast and penetration from room to room, must be considered as well as the round's impact on the target. Usually, manmade structures must be attacked before enemy personnel inside are attacked. Weapons and demolitions may be chosen for employment based on their effects against masonry and concrete rather than against enemy personnel.

Section IV. OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS

Offensive operations in urban areas are based on offensive doctrine modified to conform to the urban terrain. Urban combat also imposes a number of demands that are different from other field conditions, such as combined arms integration, fires, maneuver, and use of special equipment. As with all offensive operations, the commander must retain his ability to fix the enemy and maneuver against him. Offensive UO normally have a slower pace and tempo than operations in other environments. Missions are more methodical. The battalion must be prepared to conduct different missions simultaneously. For example, a battalion may establish checkpoints in one section of a city and simultaneously clear enemy in another section.

> "*From 1942 to the present, shock units or special assault teams have been used by attackers (and often by defenders) with great success. These assault teams are characterized by integration of combined arms. Assault teams typically contain Infantry with variable combinations of armor, artillery, or engineers."*
>
> Technical Memorandum 5-87
> Modern Experience in City Combat
> US Army Human Engineering Laboratory
> March 1987

6-21. OFFENSIVE FRAMEWORK

Figure 6-9 depicts the urban operational framework as it applies to offensive operations and shows the tactical tasks of subordinate units. While the elements of the operational framework are not phases, tactical tasks may become phases at the battalion level and below, based on the factors of METT-TC. Properly planned and executed offensive operations involve all tactical tasks shown. They may be conducted simultaneously or sequentially, depending on the factors of METT-TC. During offensive operations, the SBCT commander's intent normally includes--

- Synchronizing precision fires, information operations, and nonlethal capabilities.
- Isolating decisive points to dominate the urban area.
- Using superior combat power to destroy high pay-off targets.
- Using close combat, when necessary, against decisive points.
- Transitioning quickly to stability or support operations.
- Detailed intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance plan to assess the situation.

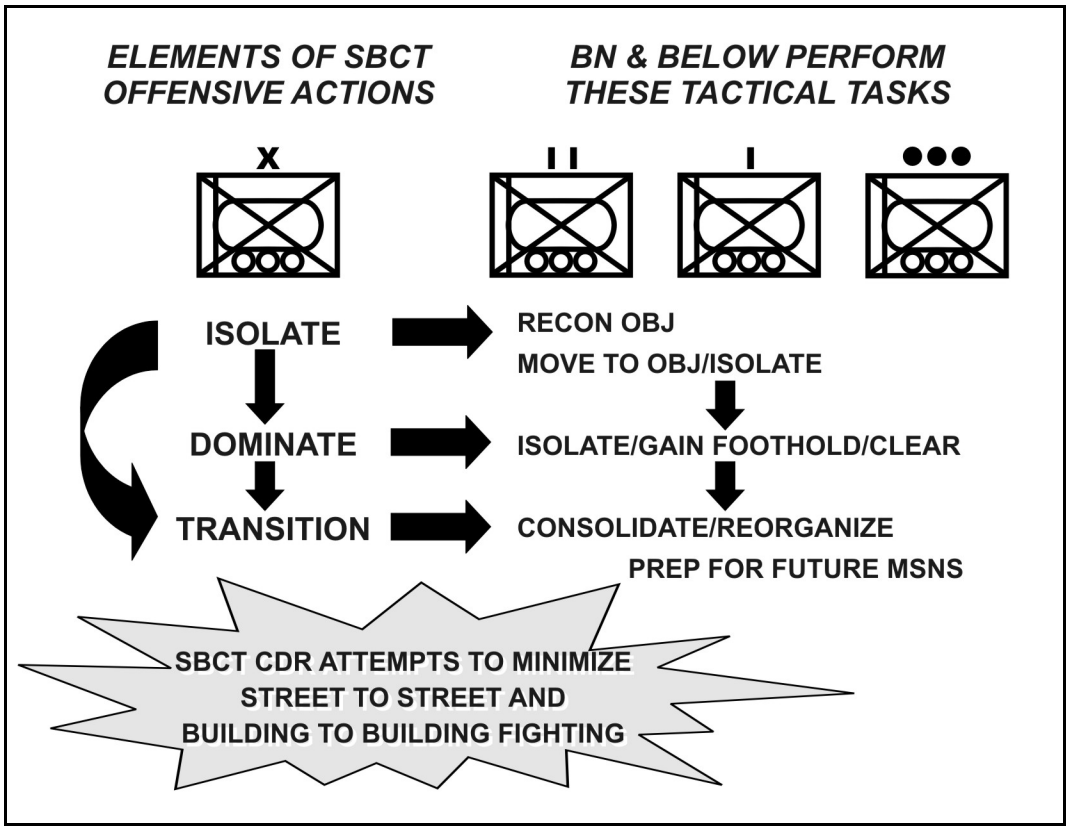

Figure 6-9. Offensive urban operational framework.

6-22. TYPES OF OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS

Offensive operations in an urban area are planned and implemented based on the factors of METT-TC. At the battalion level, the offense takes the form of either a deliberate or hasty operation such as a movement to contact or attack. The battalion may also be given the mission to conduct special purpose attacks such as a raid, demonstration, spoiling attack, or counterattack.

a. **Hasty Operations.** The battalions conduct hasty offensive operations after a successful defense or as part of a defense, as a result of a movement to contact, a meeting engagement, or a chance contact during a movement; or in a situation where the unit has the opportunity to attack vulnerable enemy forces. The attack in an urban area differs because the close, complex nature of the terrain makes command, control, and communications, as well as massing fires to suppress the enemy, more difficult. In urban areas, incomplete information, intelligence, and concealment may require the maneuver unit to move through, rather than around, the friendly unit fixing the enemy in place. Control and coordination become important to reduce congestion at the edges of the urban area.

b. **Deliberate Operations.** A deliberate offensive operation is a fully synchronized operation that employs all available assets against the enemy's defense, IAW with the ROE. Deliberate operations are characterized by detailed planning based on available information, thorough reconnaissance, preparation, and rehearsals. Given the nature of urban terrain, the attack of an urban area is similar to the techniques employed in

assaulting a strongpoint. At the battalion level, an attack of an urban area usually involves the sequential execution of the following tactical tasks.

(1) ***Reconnoiter the Objective.*** This involves making a physical reconnaissance of the objective with battalion assets and those of higher headquarters, as the tactical situation permits. It also involves making a map reconnaissance of the objective and all the terrain that will affect the mission and an analysis of aerial imagery, photographs, or any other detailed information about the building(s) and other appropriate urban terrain. Additionally, any other information collected by reconnaissance and surveillance units, such as the battalion reconnaissance platoon and or snipers, should be considered during the planning process.

(2) ***Move to the Objective.*** This may involve moving through open terrain, urban terrain, or both. Movement should be made as rapidly as possible without sacrificing security. Movement should be made along covered and concealed routes and can involve moving through buildings, down streets, in subsurface areas, or a combination of all three.

(3) ***Isolate the Objective.*** Isolation begins with the efforts of special operations force (SOF) units controlled by higher headquarters to influence enemy and civilian actions. The battalion commander should consider using PSYOP teams, if available, to broadcast appropriate messages to the enemy and to deliver leaflets directing the civilian population to move to a designated safe area.

(a) In certain situations requiring precise fire, snipers can provide an excellent method of isolating key areas while simultaneously minimizing collateral damage and noncombatant casualties. (See Appendix C, Sniper Employment.)

(b) Isolating the objective also involves seizing terrain that dominates the area so that the enemy cannot supply, reinforce, or withdraw its defenders. It also includes selecting terrain that provides the ability to place suppressive fire on the objective. Battalions may be required to isolate an objective as part of the overall SBCT operation or to do so independently. Depending on the tactical situation, companies within the battalion may have to isolate an objective by infiltration.

(4) ***Secure a Foothold.*** Securing a foothold involves seizing an intermediate objective that provides cover from enemy fire and a location for attacking troops to enter the urban area. The size of the foothold depends on the factors of METT-TC.

(a) As a company attacks to gain a foothold, it should be supported by suppressive fires and smoke. In the example shown in Figure 6-10, the center battalion conducts a supporting attack to seize OBJ DOG. (The battalion commander has determined that two intermediate objectives are necessary in order to seize OBJ DOG.)

(b) One company secures a foothold in OBJ Y. As a follow-on mission, the same company either seizes OBJ Z and supports the battalion main effort by fire or facilitates the passage of another company through OBJ Y to seize OBJ Z and support the battalion main effort by fire.

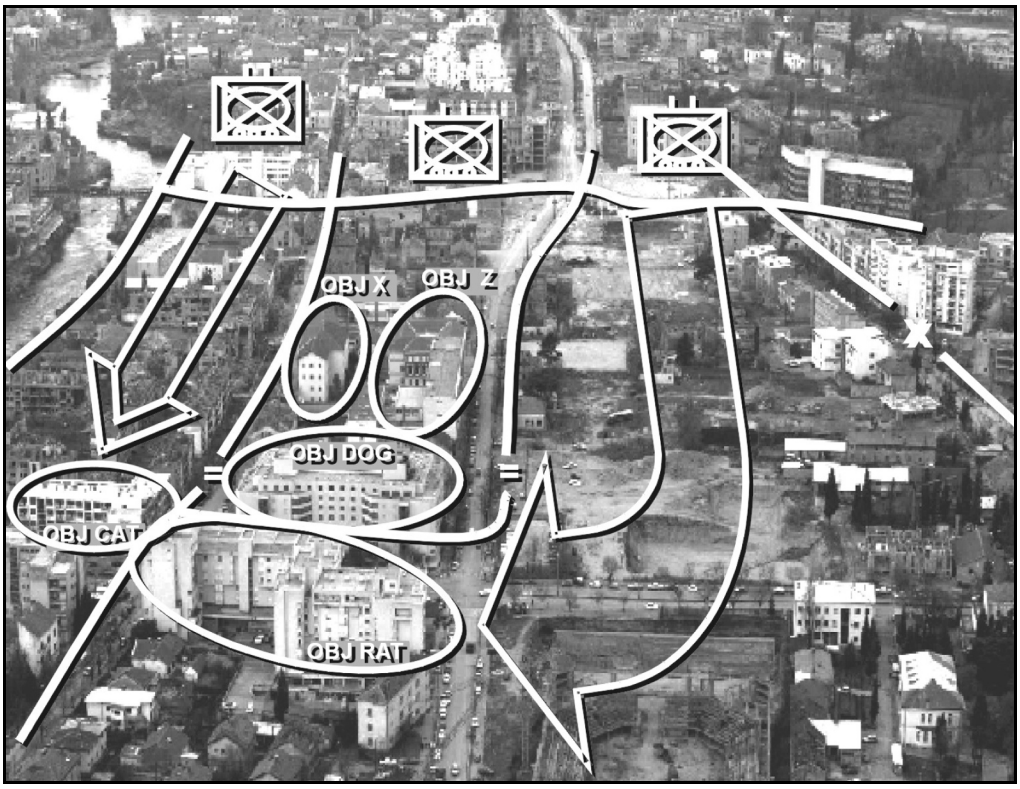

Figure 6-10. Securing a foothold, battalion attack.

(5) ***Clear an Urban Area.*** The commander may decide to selectively clear only those parts necessary for the success of his mission if--

- An objective must be seized quickly.
- Enemy resistance is light or fragmented.
- The buildings in the area have large open areas between them. (In this case, the commander clears only those buildings along the approach to his objective or only those buildings necessary for security.)

The mission may require the battalion to systematically clear an area of all enemy. Through detailed analysis, the battalion commander may anticipate that he will be opposed by a strong, organized resistance or will be in areas having strongly constructed buildings close together. He may assign his company zones within the battalion zone or AO in order to conduct systematic clearing (Figure 6-11, page 6-32).

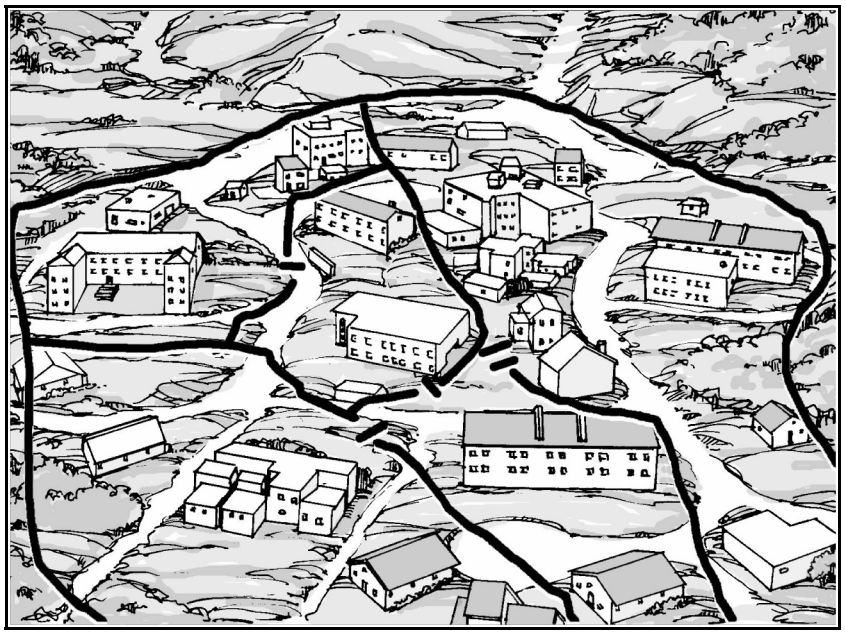

Figure 6-11. Systematic clearance within assigned areas.

(6) ***Consolidate or Reorganize and Prepare for Future Missions.*** Consolidation occurs immediately after each action. Reorganization and preparation for future missions occurs after consolidation. Many of these actions occur simultaneously.

(a) Consolidation provides security, facilitates reorganization, and allows the battalion to prepare for counterattack. Rapid consolidation after an engagement is extremely important in an urban environment.

(b) Reorganization actions (many occurring simultaneously) prepare the unit to continue the mission. The battalion prepares to continue the attack or prepares for future missions, including the possible transition to stability and support operations.

NOTE: FBCB2 assets significantly improve friendly force situational understanding in digitally equipped units.

(c) Medical treatment in urban operations does not change; however, there are differences for evacuation and a greater reliance on self-aid and buddy aid and combat lifesavers. Casualty evacuation in an urban environment presents many challenges in the location, acquisition, and evacuation of patients. Techniques may require modification to acquire and evacuate casualties from above, below, and at ground level. Further, during UO, the environment (rubble and debris) may dictate that evacuation be accomplished by litter carriers rather than by vehicle or aircraft. Commanders should be prepared for evacuation from within buildings and for the possibility that medical evacuation by Army air may not be available due to the fragility of the aircraft and their susceptibility to small arms fire. Treatment facilities may have to be moved much farther forward than usual. Units need specific medical policies, directives, and SOPs for dealing with noncombatants.

6-23. CORDON AND ATTACK

Cordon and attack is a tactical task given to a battalion to prevent withdrawal from or reinforcement of a position. A cordon is a type of isolation. It implies seizing or controlling key terrain or mounted and dismounted avenues of approach. Figure 6-12 depicts an SBCT attacking to seize and clear OBJ EAGLE using the cordon and attack technique. Skillful application of fires and other combat multipliers may also defeat the enemy and preclude close combat. In the example shown in Figure 6-12, the battle positions are oriented to place fires on the enemy leaving OBJ EAGLE and to prevent his withdrawal from the objective area. The factors of METT-TC determine the mission end state and how the battle positions are oriented. Additional direct fire control measures, such as target reference points and engagement areas and indirect fire control measures can focus fires and assist in canalizing the enemy into desired areas.

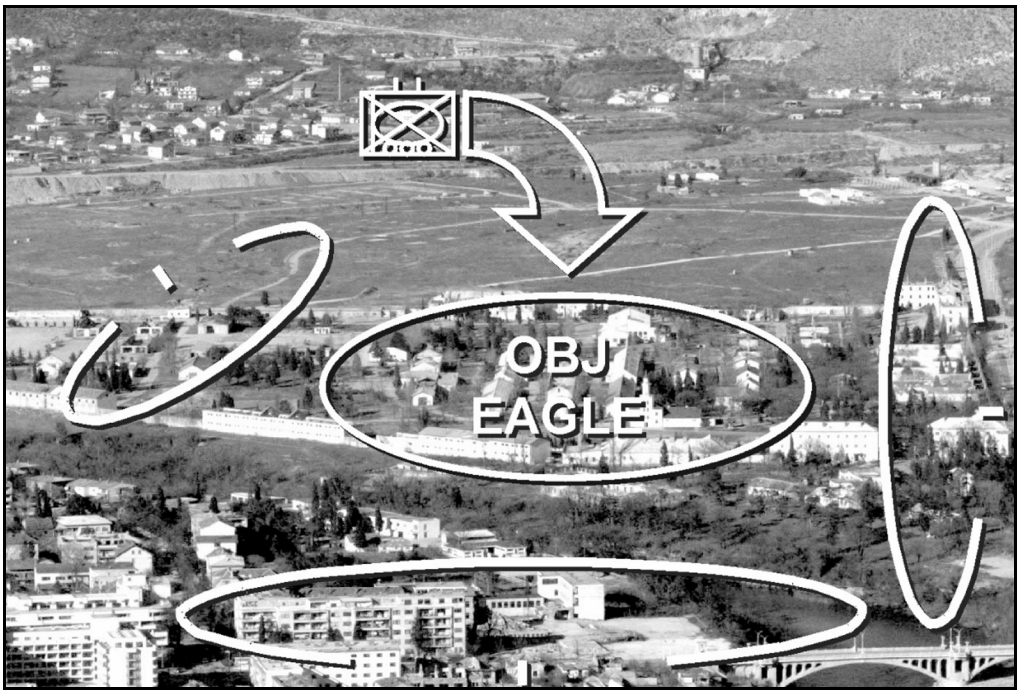

Figure 6-12. Isolation of an urban area by an SBCT infantry battalion using the cordon and attack technique.

6-24. TRANSITION

During transition, the battalion continues to use all CS and CSS assets consistent with the mission end state and ROE to move from offensive operations to stability or support operations. The ultimate goal is to return the urban area to civilian control. During this step, the roles and use of SOF, CS, and CSS units (civil affairs, PSYOP, medical, and military police) become more important with the requirements to maintain order and stabilize the urban area. These assets normally support the battalion's transition efforts under SBCT control. The battalion staff, in coordination with the SBCT staff, must prepare to transition from being a "supported" force to being the "supporting" force.

6-25. MOVEMENT TO CONTACT

Figure 6-13 depicts a movement to contact in an urban area using the search and attack technique. The battalion uses this technique when the battalion commander does not have adequate information and a clear vision of the enemy situation and the information cannot be gathered by SBCT or higher echelon elements. The battalion normally employs this technique against a known weak enemy force that is disorganized and incapable of massing strength (for example, urban insurgents or gangs). The battalion divides its portion of the AO into smaller areas and coordinates the movement of companies. It can either assign sectors to specific companies or control their movement by sequential or alternate bounds within the battalion sector. In the example shown in Figure 6-13, companies would find, fix, and finish the enemy, or they would find and fix the enemy and the battalion would assign another company the task of finishing the enemy (sequential or alternate bounds). During a mission of this type, the urban environment makes finding, fixing, and finishing the enemy difficult for conventional infantry forces. For example, movement of units may become canalized due to streets and urban "canyons" created by tall buildings. The application of firepower may become highly restricted based on the ROE. The use of HUMINT in this type of action becomes increasingly more important and can be of great assistance during the "find" portion of the mission. This mission requires close coordination between dismounted infantry, MGSs, and ICVs as they move through and search the urban area.

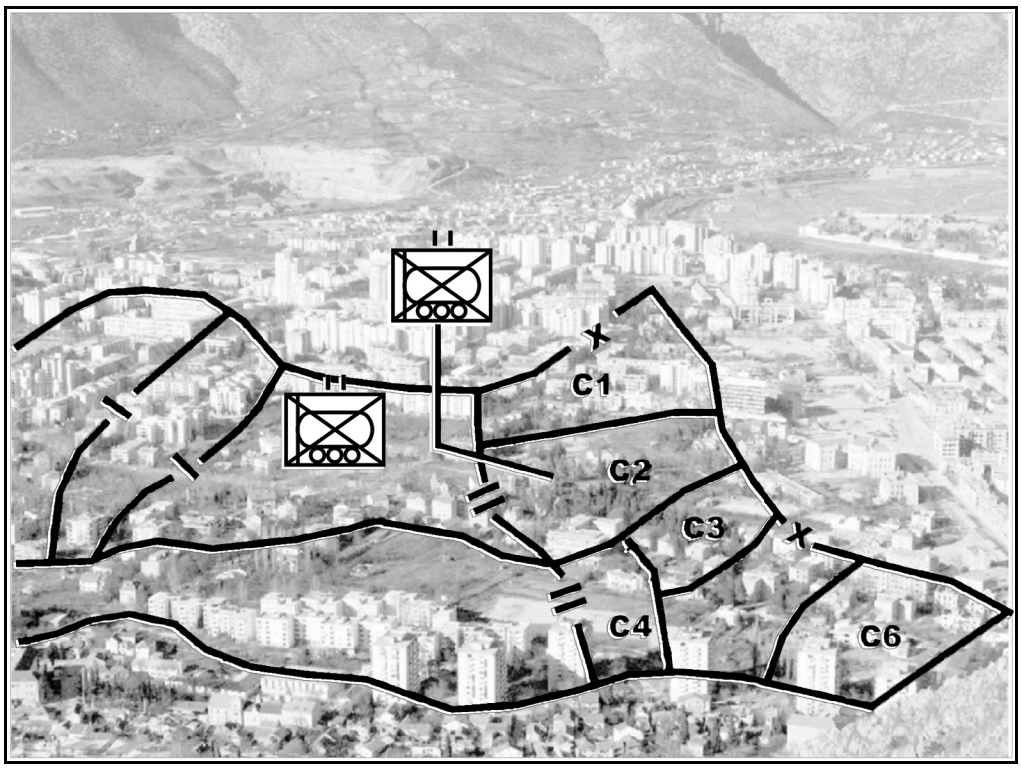

Figure 6-13. Search and attack technique.

6-26. INFILTRATION

The following is an example that describes the actions of an SBCT infantry battalion conducting an infiltration with engineers attached.

a. The outskirts of a town may not be strongly defended. Its defenders may have only a series of antiarmor positions, security elements on the principal approach, or positions blocking the approaches to key features in the town. The strongpoints and reserves are normally deeper in the city.

b. A battalion may be able to seize a part of the town by infiltrating platoons and companies between those enemy positions on the outskirts. Moving by stealth on secondary streets using the cover and concealment of back alleys and buildings, the battalion may be able to seize key street junctions or terrain features, to isolate enemy positions, and to help following units pass into the urban area. Such an infiltration should be performed when visibility is poor and no civilians are in the area.

c. The infantry battalion is organized into infiltration companies with engineers and a reserve consistent with METT-TC. Each company should have an infiltration lane that allows stealthy infiltration by company-size or smaller units. Depending on the construction of the urban area and streets, the infiltration lane may be 500 to 1,500 meters wide.

d. The infiltrating companies advance on foot, with stealth, using available cover and concealment. Mortar and artillery fire can be used to divert the enemy's attention and cover the sound of infiltrating troops.

e. Armored vehicles and antiarmor weapons are positioned to cover likely avenues of approach for enemy armored vehicles. The battalion commander may position attached antiarmor units to cover the likely avenues of approach. The reconnaissance platoon, antiarmor units, and MGSs screen the battalion's most vulnerable flanks. In addition, the antiarmor units can support by fire if the situation provides adequate support by fire positions.

f. As the companies move into the built-up area, they secure their own flanks. Security elements may be dropped off along the route to warn of a flank attack. Engineers assist in breaching or bypassing minefields or obstacles. Enemy positions are avoided but reported.

g. The infiltrating companies proceed until they reach their objective. At that time they consolidate, reorganize, and arrange for mutual support. They patrol to their front and flanks and establish contact with each other. The company commander may establish a limit of advance to reduce chances of enemy contact or to ensure safety from friendly forces.

h. If the infiltration places the enemy in an untenable position and he must withdraw, the rest of the battalion is brought forward for the next phase of the operation. If the enemy does not withdraw, the battalion must clear the urban area before the next phase of the operation. If the enemy counterattacks, the battalion may establish a hasty defense (Figure 6-14, page 6-36).

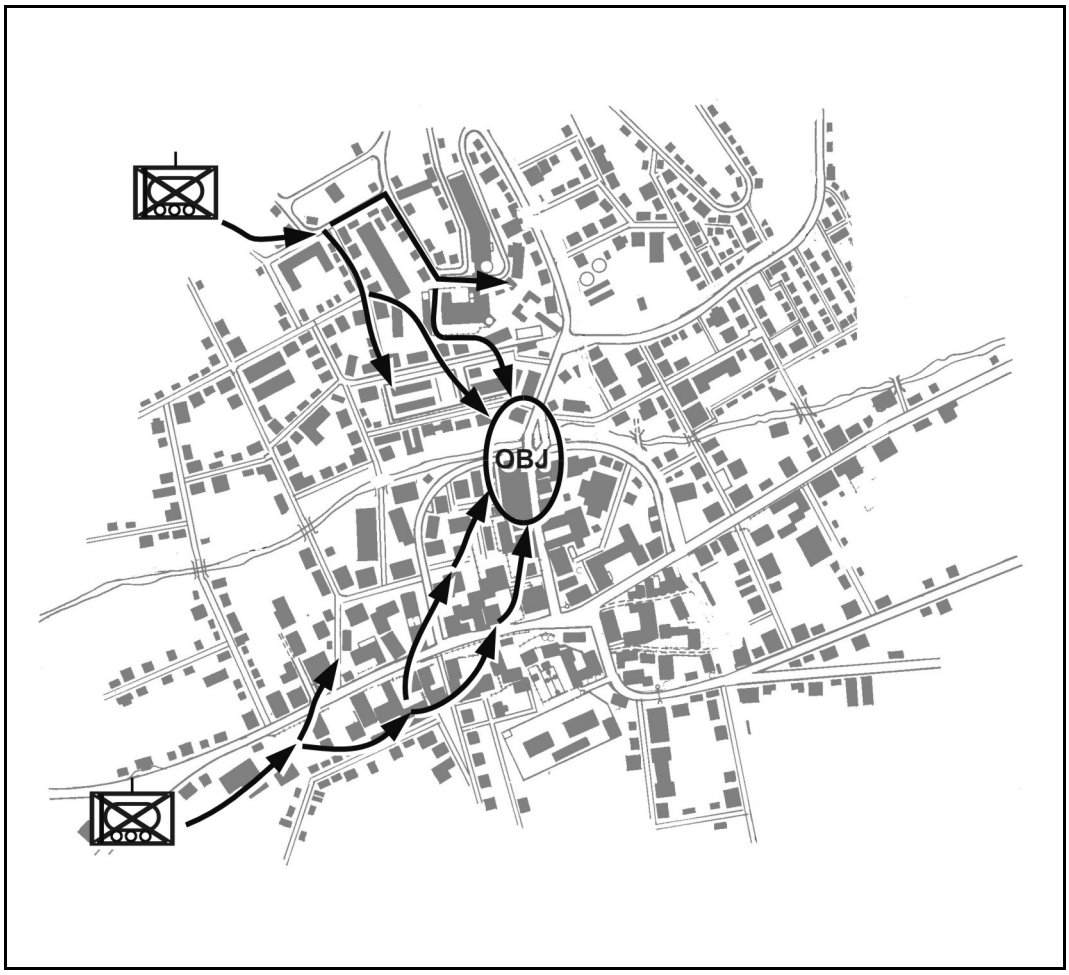

Figure 6-14. Infiltration.

6-27. ATTACK OF A VILLAGE

The battalion may have to conduct either a hasty or deliberate attack of a village that is partially or completely surrounded by open terrain (Figure 6-15). After considering the factors of METT-TC, the battalion performs these tactical tasks:

- Reconnoiter the objective.
- Move to the objective.
- Isolate the objective.
- Secure a foothold.
- Clear the objective.
- Consolidate, reorganize, and prepare for future missions.

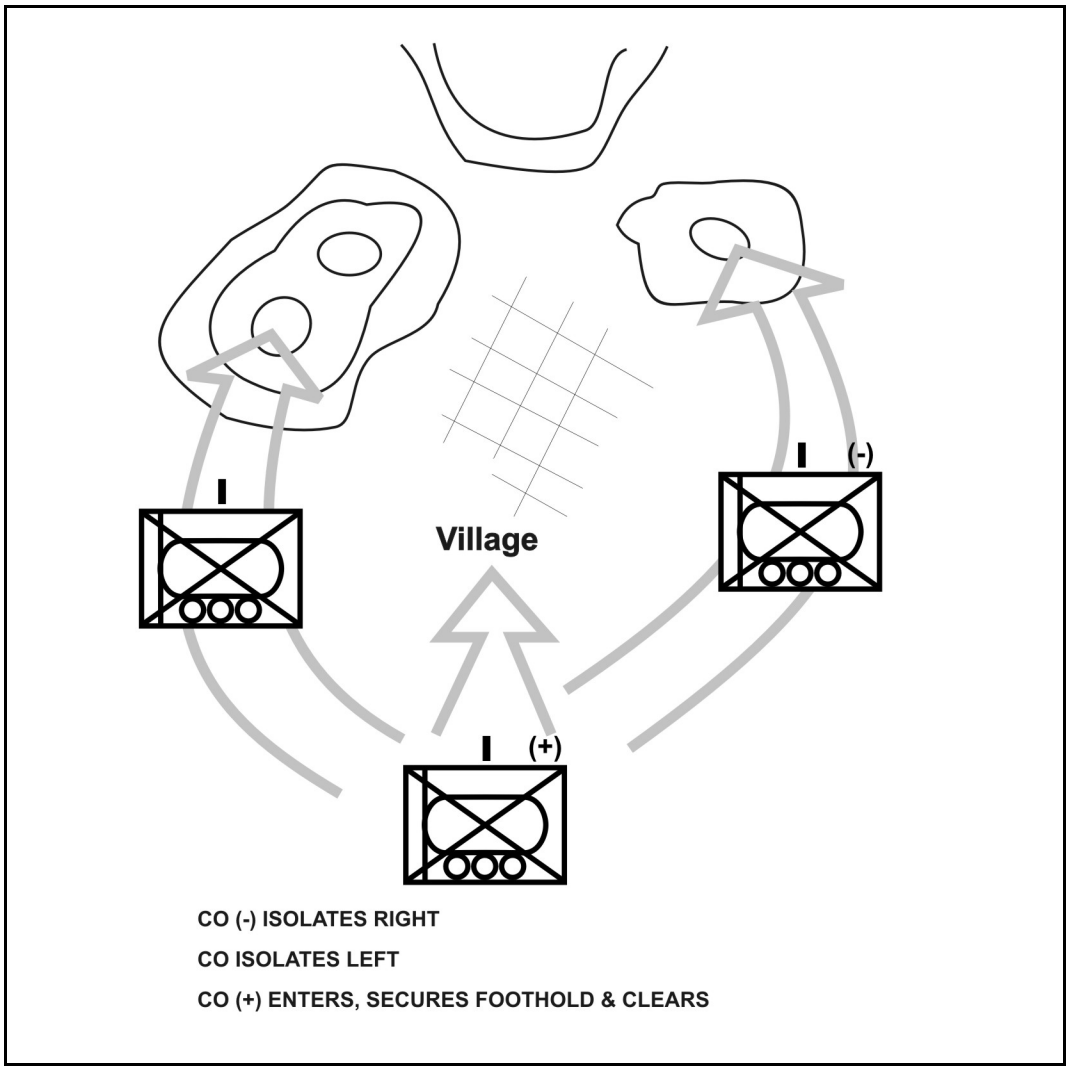

Figure 6-15. Attack of a village.

6-28. NODAL ATTACK

The battalion may receive the mission to seize a key node (or nodes) as part of the SBCT operation. In certain situations, the battalion may have to seize nodes independently. Nodal attacks are characterized by rapid attacks followed by defensive operations. The enemy situation must permit the attacking force to divide its forces and seize key nodes. Multiple attacks, as depicted in Figures 6-16 and 6-17, page 6-38, require precise maneuver and supporting fires. The battalion may receive a nodal attack mission before an anticipated stability or support operation or when isolation of an urban area is required so other units can conduct offensive operations inside the urban area. Figure 6-16, page 6-38, depicts an SBCT conducting multiple nodal attacks. Figure 6-17, page 6-38, depicts a battalion executing a nodal attack. Nodal attacks are used to deny the enemy key infrastructure. They may require a designated rapid response element (or elements) in reserve in the event that enemy forces mass and quickly overwhelm an attacking battalion. Normally, the reserve is planned at SBCT level. Battalions executing a nodal

attack independently must plan for a designated rapid response reserve element. The duration of this attack should not exceed the battalion's self-sustainment capability.

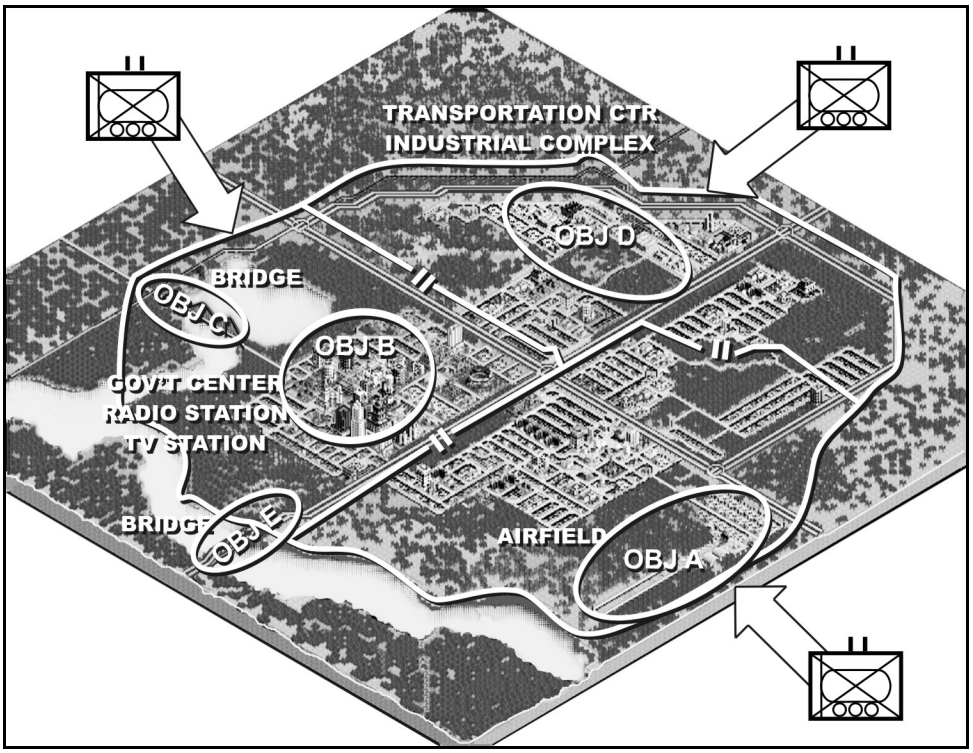

Figure 6-16. SBCT scheme of maneuver, nodal attack.

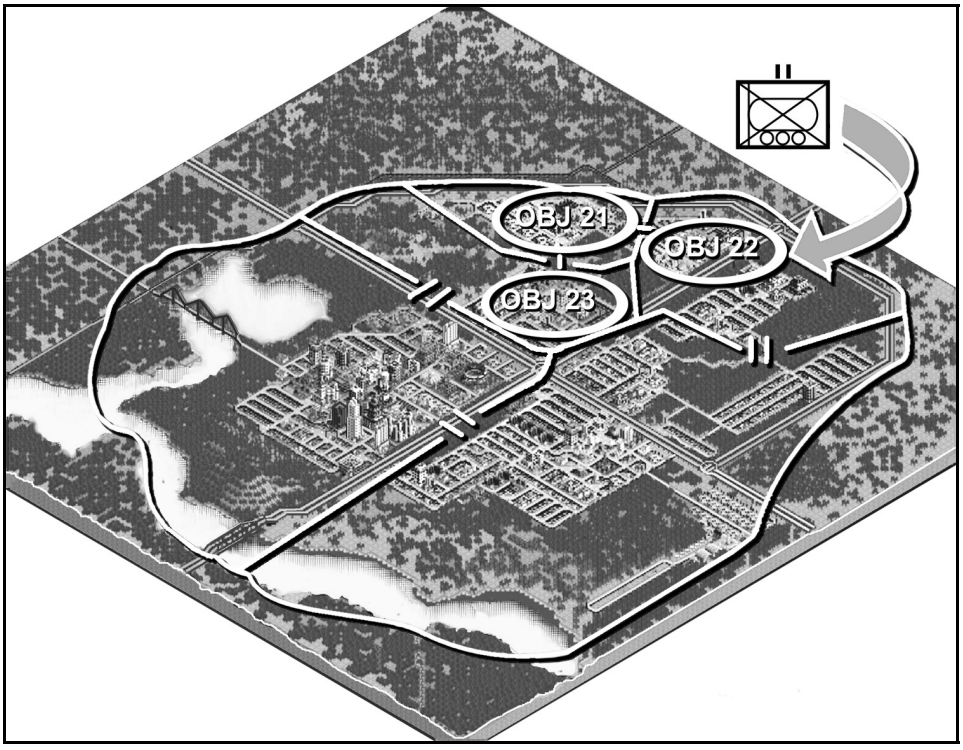

Figure 6-17. Battalion nodal attack.

Section V. DEFENSIVE OPERATIONS

An area defense concentrates on denying an enemy force access to designated terrain for a specific time and is the type of defense most often used for defending an urban area. The mobile defense concentrates on the destruction or defeat of the enemy through a decisive counterattack. A division or corps most frequently conducts a mobile defense, but the SBCT is also capable of conducting a mobile defense. The SBCT infantry battalion participates in mobile defenses as an element in the fixing force conducting a delay or area defense or as an element of the striking force conducting offensive operations. In an urban area, the defender must take advantage of the abundant cover and concealment. He must also consider restrictions to the attacker's ability to maneuver and observe. By using the terrain and fighting from well-prepared and mutually supporting positions, a defending force can inflict heavy losses upon, delay, block, or fix a much larger attacking force.

6-29. DEFENSIVE FRAMEWORK

Normally, the battalion conducts defensive operations as part of the SBCT. The SBCT can conduct the full range of defensive operations within a single urban area or in an AO that contains several small towns and cities using the elements of the urban operational framework shown in Figure 6-18, page 6-40. The SBCT avoids being isolated through its security operations. It assigns defensive missions to subordinate battalions in order to achieve the commander's intent and desired end state. Well-planned and executed defensive operations have four elements: assess, shape, dominate, and transition. During defensive operations, the SBCT commander seeks to--

- Avoid being isolated by the enemy.
- Defend key and decisive terrain, institutions, or infrastructure.
- Use offensive fire and maneuver to retain the initiative.

Battalions conduct defensive operations by conducting counterreconnaissance missions and patrols (avoiding isolation); assigning battle positions or sectors to companies (defending); and consolidating or reorganizing and preparing for follow-on missions (transitioning).

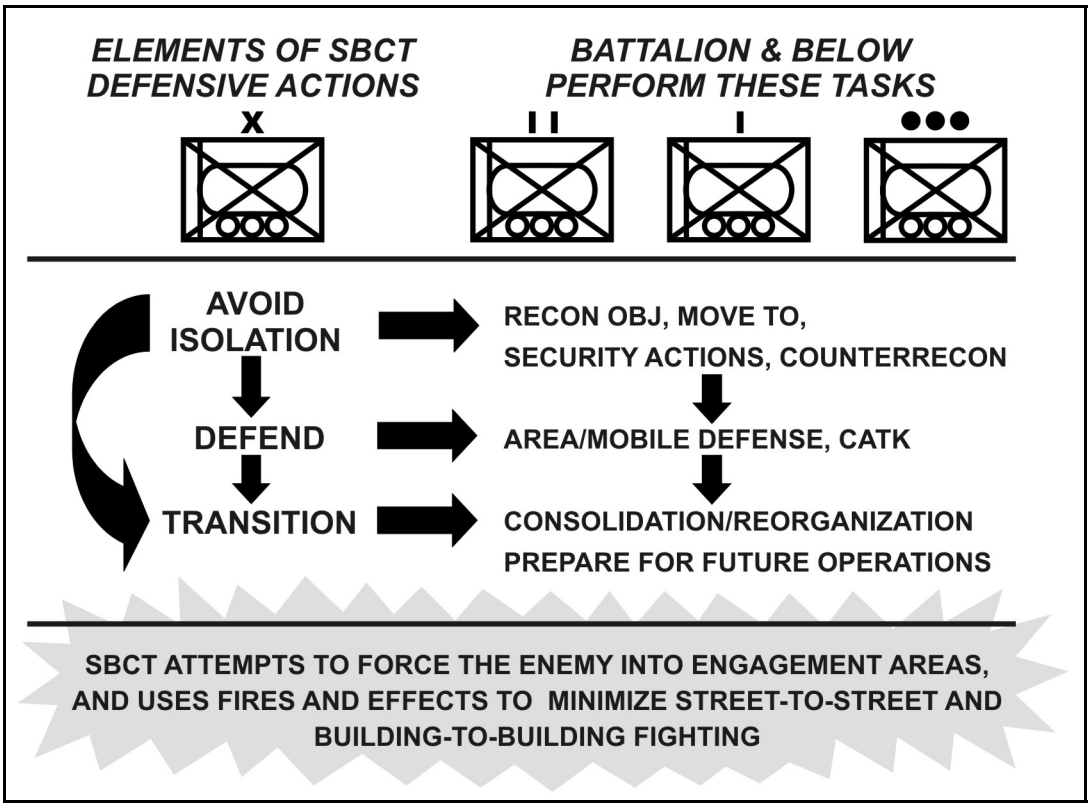

Figure 6-18. Defensive urban operational framework.

6-30. DEFENSIVE PLANNING

Battalions defending in urban areas must prepare their positions for all-round defense. Subordinate units must employ aggressive security operations that include surveillance of surface and subsurface approaches. Battalions must constantly patrol and use OPs and sensors to maintain effective security. They must take special measures to control enemy combatants who have intermixed with the local population and civilian personnel who may support the enemy.

a. Defensive fire support in urban operations must take advantage of the impact of indirect fires on the enemy before he enters the protection of the urban area. Fire support officers at all levels must coordinate and rehearse contingencies that are inherent to nonlinear fire support coordination measures and clearance of fires. Civil affairs and PSYOP assets should be coordinated with the appropriate command and control warfare or information operations headquarters.

b. In planning a defense in an urban area, the battalion staff must identify the following:

- Positions and areas that must be controlled to prevent enemy infiltration.
- Sufficient covered and concealed routes for movement and repositioning of forces.
- Structures and areas that dominate the urban area.
- Areas, such as parks and broad streets, that provide fields of fire for tanks and antiarmor weapons.
- Areas to position artillery assets.

- C2 locations.
- Protected areas for CSS activities.
- Engagement areas to include employment and integration of obstacles with direct and indirect fires.
- Sniper engagement criteria. (See Appendix C, Sniper Employment.)
- Suitable structures that are defensible and provide protection for defenders.
- Contingency plans in the event that the battalion must conduct breakout operations.
- Plans for rapid reinforcement.

6-31. INTEGRATING THE URBAN AREA INTO THE DEFENSE

The battalion may integrate villages, strip areas, and small towns into the overall defense, based on higher headquarters' constraints and applicable ROE (Figure 6-19). A defense in an urban area, or one that incorporates urban areas, normally follows the same sequence of actions and is governed by the principles contained in Chapter 5. When defending predominately urban areas, the battalion commander must consider that the terrain is more restricted due to buildings that are normally close together. This usually requires a higher density of troops and smaller company sectors or battle positions than in open terrain.

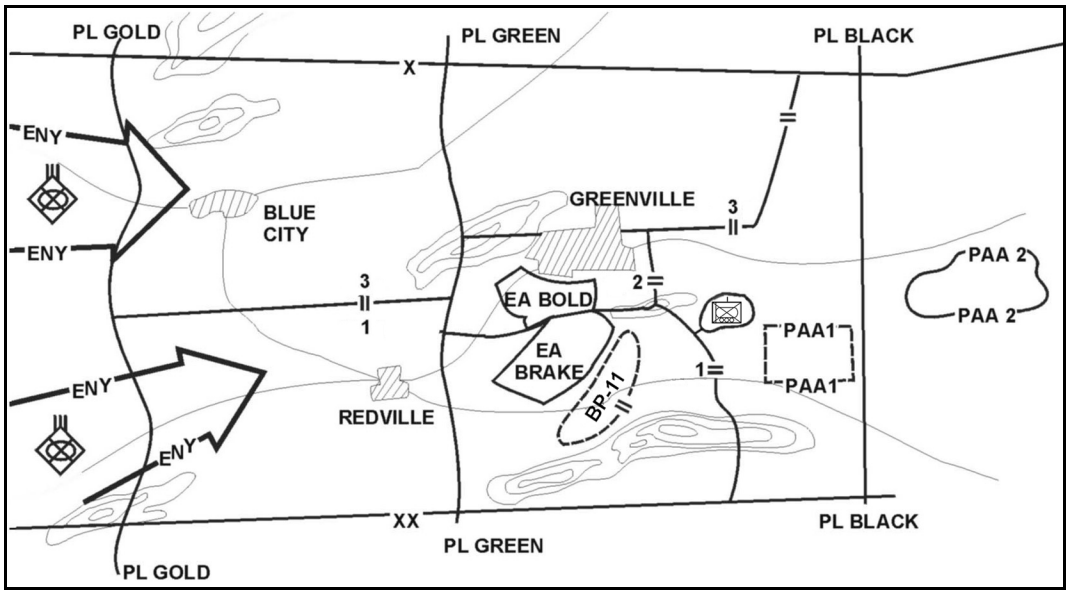

Figure 6-19. Integrating urban areas into a defense.

6-32. NODAL DEFENSE

Figure 6-20, page 6-42, depicts a transitional situation where the battalion moves from an offensive to a defensive operation. The SBCT mission may contain factors that require varying defensive techniques by the subordinate battalions under SBCT control. Figure 6-21 depicts a nodal defense where battalions employ different defensive techniques in order to achieve the SBCT commander's desired end state. The SBCT commander's intent is to safeguard the key nodes seized during the offensive operation in order eventually to return the infrastructure of this particular urban area back to civilian control.

A combination of sectors, battle positions, strongpoints, roadblocks, checkpoints, security patrols, and OPs could be employed within the battalion sector or AO. Figure 6-21, page 6-43, depicts the changed battalion task organizations, the extended boundaries, and the directed OPs.

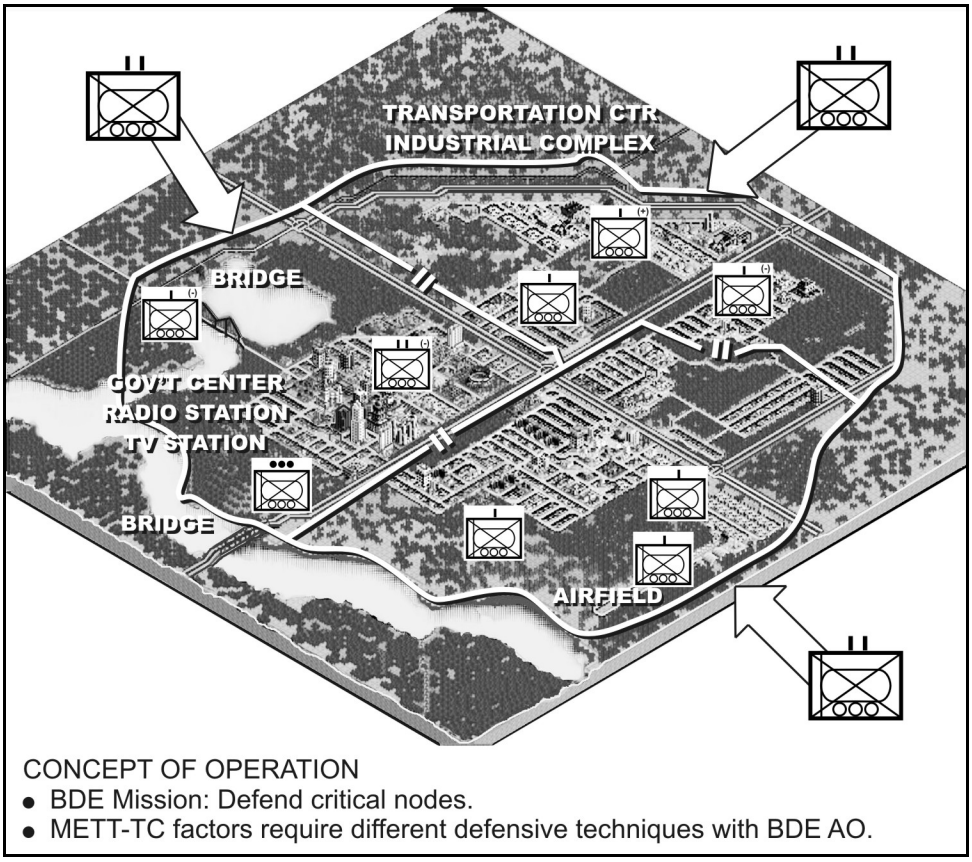

Figure 6-20. Nodal defense, transitional situation.

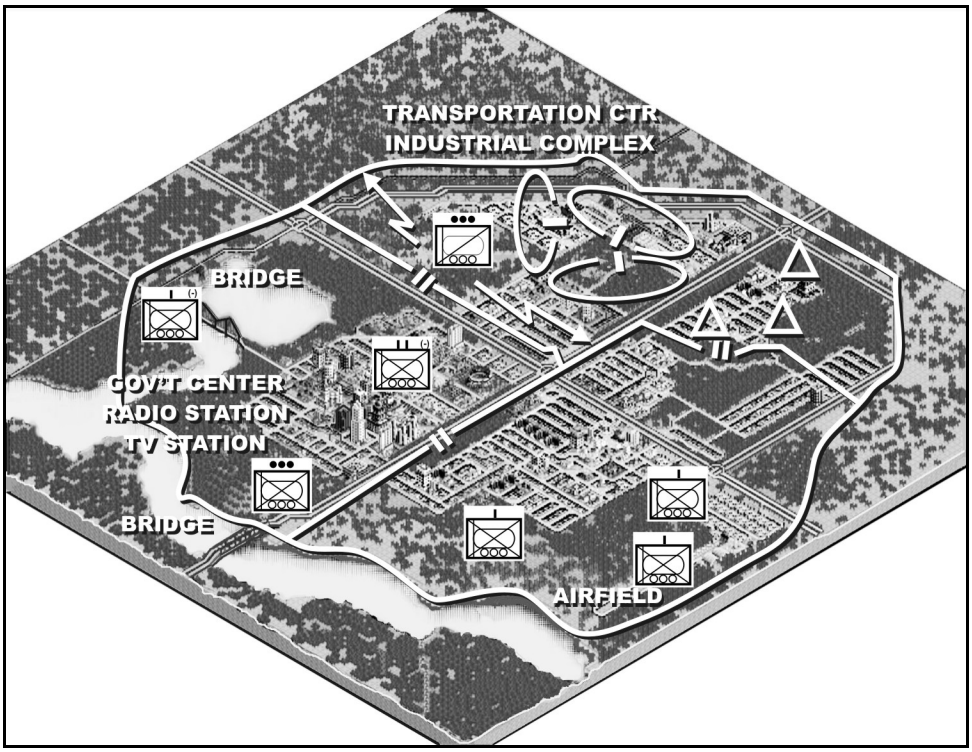

Figure 6-21. Nodal defense, different defensive techniques.

a. **Task Organization.** Companies may have to be task-organized to conduct the specific missions assigned by the battalion commander in a nodal defense.

b. **Symmetrical and Asymmetrical Threats.** The battalion is likely to respond to both symmetrical and asymmetrical threats within the area of operations. The defensive techniques chosen by subordinate companies should allow them to respond to the specific threats in their respective AOs, battle positions, or sectors.

c. **Boundary Changes.** Again, based on the battalion commander's intent and the defensive scheme of maneuver, boundary changes may be required in order to give companies more or less maneuver space.

d. **ROE Modification.** The ROE may require modification based on the type of mission to be conducted. The ROE may become more or less restrictive based on METT-TC factors. Commanders and leaders must ensure that the ROE are clearly stated and widely disseminated at the beginning and conclusion of each day.

6-33. DELAY

The purpose of a delay is to slow the enemy, cause enemy casualties, and stop the enemy (where possible) without becoming decisively engaged or bypassed. The delay can be oriented either on the enemy or on specified terrain such as a key building or manufacturing complex.

a. **Ambushes and Battle Positions.** The battalion conducts a delay in an urban area from a succession of ambushes and battle positions (Figure 6-22, page 6-44). The width of the battalion zone depends on the amount of force available to control the area, the nature of the buildings and obstacles along the street, and the length of time that the enemy must be delayed.

(1) ***Ambushes.*** The battalion plans ambushes on overwatching obstacles. Ambushes are closely coordinated but executed at the lowest levels. The deployment of the battalion is realigned at important cross streets. The battalion can combine ambushes with limited objective attacks on the enemy's flanks, employing MGSs and ICVs along with dismounted infantry. These are usually effective at the edge of open spaces (parks, wide streets, and so forth).

(2) ***Battle Positions.*** The battalion should place battle positions where heavy weapons, such as MGSs, ICVs, antiarmor weapons, and machine guns, have the best fields of fire. Such locations are normally found at major street intersections, in parks, and at the edge of open residential areas. The battalion should prepare battle positions carefully and deliberately, reinforce them with obstacles and demolished buildings, and support them using artillery and mortars. The battalion should position BPs to inflict maximum casualties on the enemy and cause him to deploy for a deliberate attack.

b. **Two Delaying Echelons.** The battalion is most effective when deployed in two delaying echelons that alternate between conducting ambushes and fighting from battle positions. As the enemy threatens to overrun a battle position, the company disengages and delays back toward the next battle position. As the company passes through the company to the rear, it establishes another battle position. The battalion uses smoke and demolitions to aid in the disengagement. Security elements on the flank can help prevent the enemy from out-flanking the delaying force. A small reserve can react to unexpected enemy action and conduct continued attacks on the enemy's flank.

c. **Engineers.** The engineer effort should be centralized to support the preparation of battle positions at first, then decentralized to support the force committed to ambush.

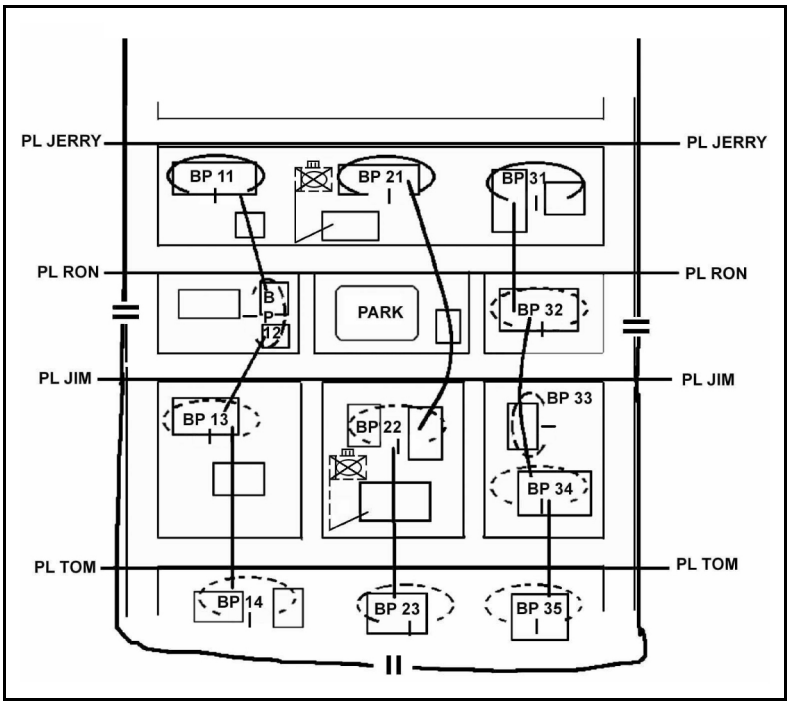

Figure 6-22. Battalion delay in an urban area.